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[Thursday evening, 15-Jul-82, Oz, California]

For now, as we usually do, we always do at the beginning of a retreat, we start with a session of tun, of practice. For those of you who do not know this teaching, you find yourself at a disadvantage when we begin with practice. And then when the practice that is being done is of a ritual character, and you do not know it, that's particularly dismaying. But at times, being a little bored or dismayed can also do you some good. It might provoke the question "Well, what is this?" And when you haven't understood, then you might be curious about understanding.

In any case, what we're about to do is a practice linked primarily with transmission. And it's also a practice that has to do with making contact with the forces or energies of this particular place and this particular moment. When we talk about doing a practice, it has a purpose and a way of working. In this case, the functioning has to do with our being conscious or aware in every sense, through all of our senses, of the energies here present.

Hereafter, from tomorrow, we'll be giving longer explanations, and what this practice involves in detail will become much clearer. This evening I think we're not going to do any lengthy explanation. So we're going to proceed forthwith to do practice. We're on page 12 of the red book. It's the section which is entitled trojay (spros-bcas) which is the title page on 11 and the actual text is on page 12. That's all for tonight.

[Friday Morning, 16-Jul-82]

I think that everyone who has come has more or less of an idea of the Dzogchen (rdzogs-chen) teaching. Many of you are older students who already know various types of practice. In any case, the principle is not that you know something or that you don't. The principle is that you find a concrete knowledge. In this regard, we're going to review briefly, even if it may not seem totally necessary, our knowledge of the condition, of the nature, and of the characteristics of the teaching.

First of all, when we speak of the Dzogchen teaching, and above all, of a teaching like the Upadesha, one immediately imagines that Upadesha is something special. And then there's word of a Dzogchen teaching which is called the Nyingthig (snying-thig), and people imagine that they can get something very special. And then people speak of the Nyingthig, or of a particular variation of the Nyingthig, and they talk about the fact that it was given by Longchenpa (klong-chen-pa), or Jigmay Lingpa ('jigs-med gling-pa), or Garab Dorje (dga'-rab rdo-rje), or who knows who. And they are always boxed into some very intellectual notion.

But even if what you learn is words that were given by Longchenpa or Jigmay Lingpa, it has no meaning at all if you haven't understood the underlying sense of it. If you have understood, then you have no need that they be words from Jigmay Lingpa or Longchenpa. You can learn from words of an ordinary person who is no one in particular. And this is a point on which it is extremely important that we stop and observe ourselves. Otherwise, we're always thinking of the teaching as some kind of object that we have to learn, and we

never find ourselves in its real sense.

When I was little, I constantly received many different teachings of many different Dzogchen traditions. And I learned them one by one and memorized many things. And I knew very well how to distinguish for example the tradition of one master from another. If one has to give a lesson about a certain text, or take a lesson about a certain text, that's perfectly valid. But if what you're interested in is realization through the teaching, you can never realize anything just learning words. You have to find yourself in the meaning, in the sense, of the teaching.

It's just the same as medicine. If we memorize some text of medicine, one, two, or three volumes, but have never practiced, never healed an illness, we've avoided the fact that the book is there just to lead to application, to provoke understanding of meaning. When you know how to apply it, then you apply it and you heal the illness. Thus, ten different people can interpret and explain something in ten different ways, but that has no importance whatsoever. What is important is that one discover what's fundamental.

So we have to go a bit into knowledge and into the understanding and method of Upadesha in this sense. And then again, Upadesha is not to be understood as merely a tradition or a book. In truth, Upadesha means a way of doing practice. But before you do any kind of practice, you have to know what the practice is, what it's about, where it's getting, how you do it.

So in the Dzogchen teaching, as in the teachings in general, we speak of a base, a path, and fruit. You don't begin with the path, you begin with the base. Because if you don't understand the basis, then the path is merely something secondary. And this is one of the reasons that gives rise to great difficulties and confusions.

Many people, seriously speaking, don't know what they're doing. They feel like doing something, and they go to a master, and they learn the technique of doing something or other. But if you were to ask that person how it works, why it works, and in what way you get to the realization, they wouldn't be able to explain it to you at all. And other times, they'll explain giving much importance to having received it, that is, "That's how my master said it", rather than "That's how it is."

Then many people refer to a given master as their root master, when in fact they don't understand what is actually meant by a root master. It's not that the person knows this master to be his root master, but rather, he's decided that that master is. And when he's decided that such and such a person is his root master, he's also decided to believe anything that that master says. It's not that he has decided to understand because he's understood the whole meaning and significance of what was communicated, but simply because he himself has decided.

Such a person imposes on himself a kind of limitation from which he never gets out. And this is a way of remaining very, very far from the teaching. Such a person may have learned a bit of technique of the path, but he hasn't understood the basis. When one says "root master", that

doesn't mean that the master has decided to be the root master of such and such a person, nor that the disciple has decided that that is his root master. Someone is your root master if he has communicated, taught, and reawakened you, if someone has followed his teaching and had a direct experience.

For example, I'm trying to understand, seeking to grasp, a certain mysterious object. To understand the truth about that object and how it is, I meet twenty different people. Each one of these twenty people has communicated to me about this mysterious object, has tried to help me understand that object. We consider that all twenty of these people are masters or teachers who have taught me, but I don't say that all twenty are my root masters. Now how do I choose among twenty of them a root master?

We've already said the individual doesn't decide that, nor does one of the twenty people decide that. Rather, I can find numberless descriptions for knowing what that object is like. But if one of these twenty has actually given me the possibility of opening my eyes and seeing that object directly, in that way, we say that such a master has directly introduced you into knowledge and you no longer remain in doubt.

If tomorrow someone gives a description of that object, certainly I can understand it. But he's no longer talking about something that's strange to me. And this is knowledge that does not change again, because now I've a direct experience of the object of that moment. So, from now on, I remain and continue in that knowledge. That's what we call a root master. This can be the third, the fourth, the fifteenth, the twentieth master I've met.

Now, in general, people simply don't understand this. They don't understand this because they don't understand the base. So in the Dzogchen teaching, what you talk about first of all is the base. Until you've understood the base, you haven't understood what Dzogchen is about. When people talk about Dzogchen, they immediately think of a school, or many people define it as a religion, and many speak of Dzogchen and believe it to be a kind of philosophy. It's always thought of as something outside the individual.

But the truth is, the meaning of the words "Dzogchen" are the "great perfection", and this great perfection is us, ourselves, our underlying state. So Dzogchen is understood as the primordial state. So if we talk about the teaching of Dzogchen, it is the same thing as the state of oneself. And the path is applied and followed only to find oneself in this knowledge of the self. When one has understood and found oneself in this state, there's nothing that one has to change. This is itself realization. So first of all, it's important, very important, to understand the base.

In general, when we speak of the tradition of the Dzogchen teaching, we always say that there is a system of the Semde (sems-sde), Longde, and the Upadesha teachings. Sem means the mind in Tibetan. It also means to think. Certainly it doesn't simply mean the mind, but it means the nature of the mind. It means that one finds oneself in, and lives in, the knowledge of the nature of the mind, also through much intellectual study, through oral explanation and teaching.

All of this series of teachings we call the Semde. And it is the basis of the Dzogchen teaching, the fundamental of it, the Semde series.

Because when the first texts of the Dzogchen teaching were introduced and translated from Oddiyana and the language of Oddiyana into Tibet, the first five texts, the texts that are called the most ancient texts, were translated by Vairocana. Then there are another thirteen texts translated by the great master Vimalamitra working with Tibetan translators. This means that these are the first texts to have appeared in the Tibetan language. Then there are many, many other texts that regard the Semde series of the Dzogchen teachings.

After that, somehow more essential, more summarized and condensed, came a series of texts having to do with the series called the Longde (klong-sde). Long means space. De means series, and this is a method which emphasizes a different way of practice.

Then there's what's called the Upadesha. The true sense of Upadesha, the meaning of the word, is those words which are reserved or held back by the teacher in communicating to his disciples. So, the implication is, the fundamental meaning is, that it's not a teaching which is universal or global. So, rather than being fundamental and uncommon, these are specific points arising from the experience, the particular experience of given masters which are specialized and given to students only from a certain point on. However, in the Upadesha, the methods for arriving at realization are all the same, complete.

Above all, in recent times, virtually all the masters who teach Dzogchen, teach the Upadesha. And what are called the Semde and Longde series of Dzogchen tend to be a little neglected. That's not a good thing. It's rather an error. But that's what's happening. Because if one doesn't possess the knowledge of the Semde and Longde series of Dzogchen, one's understanding of Upadesha can't be complete.

But why has this happened? Why is the Upadesha more widespread? There are two principal motives for this. As soon as people say that something is more important, or more elevated, or higher, that's what everyone prefers. Upadesha is said to be more elevated, much more elevated than Semde. Why? Because it's much more direct. You have to remember the last three statements of Garab Dorje. The first statement of Garab Dorje is "direct introduction", the second "do not remain in doubt", and thirdly "to continue in this state in which one no longer has doubts."

The way of working to which the Upadesha series gives emphasis has to do with that third statement of Garab Dorje. And the Semde series of Dzogchen works more with the first statement, direct introduction. And the Longde has to do above all with the second of the three statements, the one in the middle, to not remain in doubt. Now we know that to continue in the state is much more elevated than to be introduced to it. But if you don't have anything to continue, and you don't know what it is you're continuing, then it's not particularly elevated, as a matter of practical fact. For this reason, Semde is important.

So whenever you hear the Dzogchen teaching spoken of, you have to be knowledgeable and conscious that that implies all three: the Semde, the Longde, and the Upadesha. So, this much spoken of Upadesha series of Dzogchen that everyone much prefers is this.

Then there is another consideration, another reason for this error in emphasis. The Upadesha series of Dzogchen is the most, let us say, mysterious of the methods. And this method derives almost entirely from terma (gter-ma), that is, from recently discovered treasure teachings. When we speak of the Upadesha, we principally have recourse to the seventeen Tantras of Upadesha. These seventeen Tantras are considered to have been translated by Vimalamitra and his Tibetan collaborators into the Tibetan language.

So it's said that these seventeen Tantras were transmitted by Vimalamitra above all to his disciples and in particular to one called Nyang Tingzin Zangpo (nyang ting-'dzin bzang-po). Nyang Tingzin Zangpo and Vimalamitra constructed together a temple. And this temple became very famous. Some people call it Shalakong (??). When we read the histories of Tibet, this temple is very much spoken of. Inside this temple, of let's say Shalakong, there were hidden these seventeen Tantras, the texts of these seventeen Tantras. Some say that they were hidden by Vimalamitra himself, others that they were hidden by Nyang Tingzin Zangpo, others that they were hidden by the two of them together.

Why in general are these types of texts hidden? In order to afford a kind of guarantee of protection for the teaching. Above all, masters who have developed clarity can foresee that there will arise problems in changing times. And so for the future, in order to secure the teachings, many, many of these termas are placed in locations where they won't be disturbed.

So, in regard to the transmission of the Upadesha, while being communicated by other disciples: so for example, it is said that the teaching was transmitted by Nyang Tingzin Zangpo to a disciple called Dro ('bro rin-chen sgar). And then this Dro Rinchen Bar passed it on to another disciple who is called Bay Lodro Wangchug (sbas blo-gros dbang-phyug). But after Bay, his time, the teachings were re-found where they had been hidden.

But what happened between these two, in the period of time between Dro and Bay? In the intervening time, there had been a disaster in Tibet. There'd been the reign of King Langdarma, during which the Buddhist religion had been persecuted and temples, books, teachings destroyed. It's considered historically that from the time of Nyang Tingzin Zangpo who had hidden the teachings until they were later rediscovered, about a hundred years passed.

In the temple there was a person called Naytan Dangma Lhungyal (gnas-bstan ldang-ma lhun-rgyal). He wasn't a master or regarded as anyone special, but he was a practitioner who was a kind of administrator beadle of this temple. And he had communications of various kinds through dream and through vision about these texts which had been hidden and which had to be uncovered. And so he discovered in a certain part of the temple these hidden seventeen Tantras. And in this way he became a person then considered important. Then he went to

receive the oral teaching of these same seventeen Tantras from this well-known disciple who is called Bay. And so he, in the end, conveyed and transmitted these Tantras and the teachings to a master called Chetsun Senge Wangchug (lce-btsun seng-ge dbang-phyug).

This master Chetsun Senge Wangchug was someone widely considered as an important teacher. It is said that he had contact with Vimalamitra through vision. Chetsun Senge Wangchug had had direct contact with Vimalamitra, that is, contact in pure vision. But it doesn't mean that sort of in an unforeseen, unpredictable way, he had some visions. Because Vimalamitra is one who had achieved what is called the body of light through the great transfer. And when one is in this condition, it means that one has always the possibility of establishing a direct contact with individuals who have developed their clarity and capacity to see. So it is said that Vimalamitra and Senge Wangchug passed a long period of time together during which Vimalamitra explained and taught the seventeen Tantras in detail.

Thereafter, Senge Wangchug became a very, very important figure in the lineage of the Dzogchen Upadesha teachings, and became a very important case of the body of light, and the fame of the Dzogchen Upadesha began with the career of Chetsun Senge Wangchug. Then there was a great terma discoverer, a great tertön (gter-ston) Zhangton Tashi Dorje (zhang-ston bkra-shis rdo-rje). And after him came another who was called Guru Jober (jo-'ber).

And these became like the sources of the Dzogchen Upadesha teaching, because they too discovered many texts of the Dzogchen Upadesha teachings, texts which had been hidden by Padmasambhava. And thereafter, there were like hundreds of tertöns, of discoverers of hidden texts. Each of these explains some of the practices of the Upadesha, but the ultimate base that they refer back to is always the seventeen Tantras.

So, now what we know best or what is most familiar to us, are what are called the four Nyingthig, or what is considered almost a summary, or condensation, of all of this which we find either in Jigmay Lingpa or in the Longchen Nyingthig (klong-chen snying-tig). But there are many, many texts which take the title Nyingthig. And you might find on certain points, tiny differences in method of practice. In some cases they use more directly the method of the seventeen Tantras. And in some cases, like that of Zhangton Tashi Dorje, for example, some methods are a bit different. And in this way there arise many different traditions. And the tertöns, discoverers of teachings, continue to exist.

So a disciple of a given tertön certainly is likely to be specialized in the methods deriving from that teacher's discoveries. For example, a master of my master, who was called Nyagla Pema Dudul (nyag-bla pad-ma 'dud-'dul), was one of these persons who became famous because he left no physical body and also a kind of terma of his, a teaching about Dzogchen, which is called the Dzogchen Kazhag Rangdrol (?). This employs a method that is almost authentically exactly the same as that of Jigmay Lingpa and some of the methods are the same as that of the Nyingthig Yazhi (snying-thig ya-bzhi) Lama

Yangtig (bla-ma yang-tig).

There's a practice, a series of practice, called the zernga ('dzer-linga) which are practices of the elements. And that isn't in the Longchen Nyingthig. It's not in the Lama Yangtig. But it is there. And that is an example. So at times one finds particular methods in terma, but it is important that if one practices, one goes a bit to the source, to the original source. In this way, one doesn't become the slave of a book, and books rather become a means of communication for the individual.

This is the image of the Upadesha, as it is. But when we talk about Upadesha, Semde, Longde, when we pay attention to that analysis of different parts, all of that is an analysis of the path. When someone says "How do you practice?", then there are all these different methods.

But before practice, we've said one must have knowledge of the base. And the base, whether we're discussing what's spoken of in the Semde, in the Longde, in the Upadesha, the base is always the same principle. The fundamental base is what we call the state of the mind. Because everybody knows about the mind, and it's very easy to understand since we exist as body, voice, and mind. The most profound of these would be the mind, and from there we begin to understand what we call the nature of the mind. But then this nature of the mind is a very, very generic term. It's used in the Sutras. It's used in the Tantras. It's also used in the Dzogchen teachings.

When instead we say, let's call it, the primordial state, already this is a bit different. If we speak of the nature of the mind, we can also define that as the void, emptiness, for example, what's called in the teachings of the Sutra, shunyata.

Instead, in Dzogchen teaching, we speak of self-perfectedness. Self-perfectedness does not simply, merely, mean void. So we have to understand that the term "the primordial state" is not precisely and simply identical to what's called the nature of the mind. So, the explanation is given of the "nature of the mind", of its essence, its natu ^E, its energy. It's said that the essence is void or emptiness, the nature of it is clarity, and its energy is how it works or continues. This also is not just a matter of learning words in order to parrot them. But rather, one stops and observes a little our own thought.

Now we've said there's body, there's voice, there's mind, and mind is the deepest aspect. And it's there that we're looking now for knowledge. What do we mean by the mind? In this case, we mean one's thinking. If now when a thought arises, whatever thought, we stop and observe that thought, because one wants to understand the nature of the mind. Obviously, there's nowhere to look for the mind, except where one is thinking. So the only method is to observe thought.

Now one finds that the thought that's arisen, disappears. Nobody finds in the thought something concrete which remains after it's gone. If one were to continue to observe one's thought, day in, day out, one would always find this same condition that thought arises and disappears. This we call the void because there's nothing there that you can define or

get a handle on.

That which is true for our thought is also true for our sensory contacts with the object, with what's outside. Any contact we have through the senses with what we can call objects is only a way of communicating with the mind, of sending a communication to the mind. And so if one stops to observe it, this too, the sensory contact, disappears into nothing. So at bottom, one can define everything as void. But it's not that one discovers that there's void and that once that's discovered, thought doesn't arise again.

When we observe thought, it disappears, but then a moment later, sooner or later, thought arises again. Even if we've found nothing concrete there, it is the case that thought always arises again. So something is continuing. Something keeps happening even though there's nothing there. And that which keeps happening, we call clarity. And this fact that it keeps happening, we call the nature, the nature of the primordial state.

And this also has a way of working, a way of happening. For example, if a thought arises, we tend to reason with or think about this thought, to judge this thought, to move from this thought into action. And all this is the way in which things continue to happen. This means as a practical fact that a thought has the energy to produce consequences. And this fact, this force or energy, is what we call energy, energy in that triad: essence, nature, and energy.

These three terms are the analysis we make when we intellectually, conceptually, try to grasp, analyze, explain the basis, the nature of the mind. And these three are what are meant by the conventional phrase "the three primordial wisdoms", that is, the characteristics of our state, as it is. One must have pretty much this idea in view when one's trying to understand what is the state of Dzogchen. This is an example of what an individual is.

When we speak of this state, we say that nothing is lacking, that all is self-perfected because this possesses its characteristics, its qualifications, and its energy. Everything that we consider our vision, that which presents itself either as pure vision or as impure vision, is self-perfected. Now we live in the human condition, that is, with a human vision. And what is this for us?

In the Dzogchen teaching, all this which presents itself as vision, as possible contact, is part of our own energy. If that's so, if this is our own energy, how is it possible that it is presented in a situation of subject and object? This is the condition that we say arises from dualism. And we understand this through the example or illustration of the mirror. Let's take the mirror which is defined by its capacity to reflect. And this, therefore, this capacity, is an inherent characteristic or qualification of the mirror as such. And through that qualification, through that characteristic which makes it a mirror, it reflects ugly things or beautiful things.

The mirror reflects because before it there is some, let us say, object. The object being reflected and the reflection of that object are what we call interdependent. For us, there is some kind of consideration like "that's real" and "that's

not real", because we think of the object as being real and the reflection as not being real. But that very object which is being reflected is also a reflection. It's a reflection of our famous karma. Therefore, it is called our karmic vision.

Every individual has accumulated many different passions and where there's a cause, there will be an effect, and that's how karmic vision arises. And there are many different ways of being, each of which has its own karmic vision. Karmic vision of the universe of a dog doesn't correspond to that of a human being. What is called the vision of a preta, a hungry ghost, doesn't correspond to the vision of the universe of a human being. Each kind of being has its concrete kind of vision. But that vision, that concrete surrounding universe, exists concretely for that being only as long as it remains that being, as long as it has that karmic vision.

But karma is not considered simply that when one is born, one has accumulated certain karmic causes. It's not considered that one's karma is only since one's birth. There are people who ask "Now, I've never harmed anybody, but I'm always in trouble. I'm always having a hell of a time. How is that explained?" We don't consider that all the difficulties that a person has, or the problems they run into, are the results of karma. In such a case, one has to understand very clearly what is meant by karma.

But also there's not merely the karma of this life, there's also karma that's been accumulated in preceeding time. It's not that our human birth is our ultimate origin. Because being a human being is itself a karmic vision. So, that implies necessarily that one has acquired a preceeding karma. One doesn't know when one enters human vision whether one has not perhaps had another prior existence in another karmic vision. We don't know what those prior lives have been.

We don't know how many karmic causes are operating in each of us. In any case, you can be quite sure that every individual has many, many karmic causes accumulated, above all, karma which has a capacity to produce some consequence through our passions, above all, through what are called our four or five passions. Certainly it's not being said that there's only the passions and that's all. It's not being said that those are the only passions. On the contrary, they speak of 85,000 passions. But this is simply a way of saying the plural, that there are many, many. It's a way of giving emphasis to how many there are. Because we don't know, when we think of the universe, how many types of being, how many types of passions, might exist. So, it's not so easy to define a precise number.

What we know in general are our principal passions. And all of them have some similarity. All of us have some similarity. Take anybody, any person, you go up to him and punch him in the face. He gets mad. You take a club and sneak up behind a horse and swat it. It'll give you a kick. So it's not just the human being. Also animals get angry. So, rage is one of the passions, and as we know, all of us, more or less similarly, have this passion. The same is true of attachment; the human being or the animal, we all have it. So, we can say that there are common passions, similar passions, for all.

But not only this also that we accumulate. Every individual between morning and evening gets mad anyway four or five times, two or three times during the course of the day feels pangs of jealousy, a bit of attachment. In short, every day we accumulate some of these passions. If we only accumulate one of these passions once a day, by the end of the year we've accumulated a great deal. So it takes no effort at all to accumulate passions all one's life. And for these reasons, our karma of passions becomes very, very strong. And when there are these causes, certainly they correspond to certain karmic visions. And this karmic vision always begins just as a trace. But when one has accumulated a great deal of it, it becomes heavier and heavier, even if one knows very well that the principle at work is not some concreteness which actually exists.

In the Mahayana Sutras of Buddhism, they speak constantly of the illusory nature of everything. Illusion is illusion. Why? Because this is a karmic vision. It's not real. If one has purified the causes, this vision dissolves, disappears. The cause takes with it the vision. But if one doesn't purify it, one keeps accumulating. Then this karmic vision becomes ever stronger, ever heavier. And so, our karmic vision is a little like water that solidifies into ice. While it's water, one can enter into it, one can bathe in it, one can move through it, or make use of it. But when the water has become ice, it's become something hard. You want to dive into the ice, BOOM, and you break your head. Because it's become something concrete. So, in that way, our illusory vision has become for us something quite concrete.

So, our dualistic vision, our sense of subject and object, at this point has become something extremely dense and resistant. But when one understands that, when one lives in knowledge, then there's also a way of dissolving the ice. There's a way of transcending or overcoming this karmic vision. To melt the ice, to dissolve it back into water, the most powerful means is contemplation. But until you succeed in doing contemplation, it's best to slowly transform or to prevent water from turning into ice.

That is, there are many, many methods and means. And these are called the teachings. This means that, above all, that one has understood the base and understood how the energy of the base works. And then there's a way of working with that. So, for this reason, one has to understand that in the teaching of Dzogchen, the explanation and understanding of how the energy of the individual manifests is something very important. If one doesn't understand how energy manifests, then there's no way one can reintegrate.

Thus, when one enters into a teaching, one always at first practices in a very dualistic way, with a dualistic understanding. First of all one thinks "Now, this teaching, what god or divinity does it offer? What kind of prayer do I have to say? And what's the way I have to pray?" Everybody learns in that fashion. That means you're still very, very far from the teaching. That doesn't mean if you say a prayer that it won't work. There are prayers and divinities and the like, and there are always possibilities of using them.

But in the teaching of Dzogchen, one who pursues that

kind of path is still very far from the primordial state. For which reason, master Garab Dorje, who was the first master let's say of Dzogchen, communicated the first of those three statements, direct introduction. He didn't tell us to teach how you pray. He didn't tell us we have to teach how to visualize a divinity. Direct introduction means direct introduction into one's own state, to one's underlying nature.

And what does direct mean? It means a way which permits the individual to have his own knowledge through his own experience. This is the meaning of the word direct. It doesn't mean that one learns or does something external. The first thing you have to do is try to understand your own condition.

A master who is teaching the Dzogchen teaching must first of all help people understand this principle. If a person doesn't grasp this, then he must seek why he doesn't understand, what kind of obstacle or impediment is there. And if you find the impediment, you must find the way of overcoming that impediment. Nor is it said that there's only one impediment. You can also find ten of them. But there are also methods for overcoming ten. So, for this reason, one has recourse to many, many secondary practices.

So it's very important to understand first of all what's called the base, and to understand that all of our present dimension is linked to our own energy, and that energy works in three ways, which we call tsal (rtsal), dang (sdangs), and rolpa (rol-pa). This is how energy manifests objectively, let's say.

We use the example of the crystal which is put into the sun, and particularly in America now, it's very widespread. We all know very well, if you put a crystal near the window, when it's struck by the sunlight, then suddenly in the room, there are a lot of little rainbows. This is an example of how our energy manifests, as if objectively, as if something's out there. You have to understand that in this illustration, the crystal corresponds to our own state and the flashes of light, the rainbows, are our energy appearing as if they were out there.

This is a partial explanation of how our energy manifests, as if objectively outside. It means that there isn't a rainbow outside in the room, yet it appears. And it appears because the crystal has this capacity. Its intrinsic qualification permits that to appear. Well, what is, in general, color or rainbow? These colors are the essence of the elements. And when color, or play of color, becomes more dense, it becomes what we call material things. So, our karmic vision arises through this, through the play of color, which is the first part, tsal. It's energy at work, condensing into something substantial, something gross, something dense, something solid.

When we have a clearer vision, we can see all this as the play of color and see that play of color as light, then we speak of that as pure vision. And very often this is spoken of as the dimension of the Nirmanakaya.

Then we have a second way in which energy manifests which is called rolpa. Here we tend to use the example or illustration of the mirror. We think here of our primordial

state as being like a mirror. Inside that mirror are reflected all things which find themselves before it: beautiful reflections, ugly ones, whatever can arise. But all of these appearances aren't manifesting as something objective, out there. They're all manifesting these reflections in the same dimension as the situation of the mirror itself. This is one way in which energy manifests.

We can use as an example the practice of visualization. And for example, through our energy, we can manifest infinite mandalas. Though we speak of manifestation in the state of lhundrub (lhun-grub), the condition just before the bardo of existence, there arise appearances, apparitions, of a hundred deities, wrathful and peaceful manifestations. For those of you who've read a bit "The Tibetan Book of the Dead" you know about this. All of this explanation has to do with the manifestation of the rolpa energy. But we're not saying that there are two different types, completely separate and discrete, of energy. That's not what we're saying. This is simply to give you an idea of the ways that energy manifests.

Then there is a third way in which energy manifests which is called dang. Not that something manifests externally, nor that there is some particular manifestation as if an appearance in the mirror, but something appears in its condition, as it is. Let's say you were to put a piece of crystal down on a piece of red cloth. You look at that crystal. It's as if it were slightly red in color. But it's not exactly a reflection of that red. This is an example which is given for an object manifesting the third way.

But dang is more easily understood through the example of sound. Because dang as a term means in fact a way of being, a way of manifesting, of sound. A sound communicates and one can hear. One can receive the vibration of the sound. But there's nothing there that you can define or grasp. And this is characteristic of how energy presents itself. So this is how we speak when we make this analysis of the ways in which energy manifests.

In the teaching of Dzogchen, to understand the teaching well, you have to understand energy well. And all of this is explanation of the primordial state of the individual. Because there is nothing which is not self-perfected. So, what's most important is that an individual find himself in this knowledge. This is why so very much importance is given first of all to the introduction. And oral introduction is like this. Somebody explains intellectually and we understand.

But introduction and transmission always proceeds not only intellectually, but also what we call symbolically, and also through what we call direct transmission. And these continue in fact as we proceed on the path. It's not enough to say "Oh, I've had an introduction" as one might say of some symbolic initiation. Because real transmission means real knowledge. And this lived knowledge, this real knowledge, is something that one develops, and that develops further until total realization.

Total realization means for example that for you the ice has once again become water. It's not that one knows that at bottom, in origin, the ice is water. And then believing that

"Since the ice is at bottom water, I can just jump into it", jumps in and breaks his head. That's what we call intellectual knowledge. But when you jump into ice and don't break your head, it really is water for you. Then we say you're really realized.

The water has never changed at any point in this whole process. It's always water. Till that happens, until realization happens, the transmission always has to be deepened and developed. And this transmission development and deepening of transmission also takes place through practice. And there are modes of practice which also correspond to these three kinds of transmission which we've spoken: oral, symbolic, and direct.

As a matter of practical fact, what we've said now constitutes the base. And after that comes the path. The path is constituted by the way of seeing, practice, and attitude or behavior. And as regards the way of seeing and attitude or behavior, these are identical in all three series of teachings Dzogchen Semde, Longde, and Upadesha.

One thing that's of extreme importance is to understand well the view or way of seeing in Dzogchen. People who've read a lot of books of Buddhist philosophy may have a certain notion about the view. But in general, what they've understood doesn't correspond to the Dzogchen way of seeing. Because when we write on paper and ink, what we're writing is something that's come through our reasoning, our thinking, and we do some kind of analysis and we discuss what doesn't seem to correspond.

But this is the view, or way of seeing, studied as if it was something objective, something external. Buddhist philosophy is always found a bit at this level. Even if we're talking about the principle of the individual, the people who talk about it, the scholars who've written and discussed, are human beings. Human beings live in limitations and slowly, slowly, we build up limitations.

We can observe this very well by looking at each and every school, for example. They're always trying to find some point on which they can say "Our school does thus and so. They, the others, do that." On every point they try to find something a little different to say, and that's what makes them very happy. This way, when we go towards the deep, towards the profound meaning, even at the deep level, we continue to find contradictions between one school and another. "Our way of seeing, the view of our school, was stated by such and such a master."

If it's a school like the Gelugpa (dge-lugs-pa) school, for example, it's all aligned 100% on what was said by Tsongkhapa (tsong-kha-pa). Some masters are not perfectly satisfied on certain points. There for example was a great Gelugpa master, Chanchun Raba Dorje (?). When Tsongkhapa spoke of something called the tong chay si du may drubpa (? chas ?? tshad med 'grub pa), tong chas means concrete things or also means the naming of things, terms for things. Du may drub pa means it arises logically. It's a logical result, or a typical characteristic or so. On these points, Tsongkhapa has his own characteristic way of seeing.

And this famous scholar, Chanchun Raba Dorje wasn't as

happy with where Tsongkhapa got to. Chanchun Raba Dorje is an important Gelugpa personage. But even if he wasn't satisfied by Tsongkhapa's considerations, he never openly disagreed with Tsongkhapa, contradicted Tsongkhapa. All of his life, when he taught and discussed philosophy, he always supported Tsongkhapa's view. When he sang a spiritual song, he slowly, slowly, let it appear that he wasn't so completely in agreement.

The same is true in the Sakyapa (sa-skya-pa) school. There was a very famous scholar, Gorampa (go-rams-pa). And Gorampa wasn't very happy with the conclusions of Rongton (rong-ston), another Sakyapa. But when he wanted to attack or deny Tsongkhapa's conclusions, he was extremely direct and open. And he also became insulting and offensive and used curse words, because he felt himself a Sakyapa, while Tsongkhapa was Gelugpa. So if he wanted to use some offensive swear word at Tsongkhapa, that's fine. He felt heroic for doing that.

But on the contrary, when he wasn't completely in accord with the views of Rongton of his own school, then he had a great difficulty. He suffered a great deal, because he couldn't outright deny him. However, he wasn't very much in agreement with him, so his way of stating his disagreement became subtle, indirect, and hidden.

All of the schools do this. The way of proceeding is characteristic of Nyingmapa (rnying-ma-pa), of the Kagyudpa (bka'-brgyud-pa), of all the schools without exception. Because the way of seeing of the school is considered the line that was laid down by the principal persons. And that has to be followed. For example, I remember when I was in the college, there was a colleague of mine, a fellow student of mine there in college. Today he is the master and teacher of Sakya Trizin (sa-skya khri-'dzin). He's called Khanpo Ape (mkhan-po ??). He's a very fine scholar.

One day he wrote a beautiful book negating and denying the assertions of a famous Nyingmapa scholar, Nyingmapa master, Mipham, because he was in disagreement on many points. He didn't show this book to many people, because Mipham was a great personage, and he was still sort of a graduate student. "Well", he thought "maybe it was not the case. Maybe it was appropriate." But he was quite sure that he wasn't in agreement with Mipham.

And he showed this manuscript of his to one of our teachers, a famous teacher called Chezin (??) Rinpoche. Chezin Rinpoche read it and said "Better to burn it." He wasn't saying "better burn it" because he was so stupid or so badly done, nor was he saying "burn it" because Mipham was surely correct. But "burn it" to avoid creating problems. And also as a matter of practical wisdom because he was still a young student and he had his whole career before him, and it well might be that starting his career by attacking Mipham, things might not go so well for him.

So as a general matter, this is how the way of seeing or view is understood. We lived in the college and studied there. We always tried to deepen the tawa (lta-ba), the way of seeing, at this level. The truth is, I didn't understand that the tawa, the view, was to be used on the path as a way

of deepening oneself towards realization until I met my master Changchub Dorje (byang-chub rdo-rje).

But before I met Changchub Dorje, I had lots and lots of Dzogchen teachings from many different masters. A master can teach the way of seeing very, very well in the traditional manner, and above all, intellectually. He can easily apply it or make use of it only in an intellectual way.

In the Dzogchen teaching, the true tawa, or way of seeing, is not that. The way of seeing is not to measure or assess something outside us, or to create an "our" point of view, or an "our" ideology, or justify and "our" position. In the Dzogchen teaching, there is nothing to defend and nothing to construct. Rather, that has to be discovered. And the way of discovering that, the means for discovering that, is the view, the way of seeing.

So in the Dzogchen teaching, we say "to enter into or to find oneself in, to live in the knowledge of the view." This too is a very, very important point for understanding Dzogchen. In this case, this way of seeing, this view, how does it work? One grasps, one understands, one is immediately aware of our way of existing, from the very beginning, as body, voice, and mind, that we have our problems, that we have our limitations, and all this one discovers observing oneself.

Discovering one's own condition as an individual, one also discovers and understands the general, and one thus automatically discovers also why one must try to overcome this condition. And thus one also comes to understand and grasp the way of overcoming or going beyond this condition. That is, one finally understands what the teaching is and is about. And then one understands and grasps if a teaching corresponds, responds, to my condition. And whether practice, this practice, in fact answers my condition or not, responds to my condition or not. All of this you understand by understanding yourself.

So this is why we say that the way of seeing has to be found in a living way, in practice. It's a practical matter. It's not very necessary to make a good study of some beautiful book and to have learned very many ways and analyzing matters. In the Dzogchen teaching, one can very well have found oneself in this living knowledge of the view, this living knowledge of the way of seeing, without ever having looked into a book. So you mustn't at all confound the way of seeing of the intellect, the view as an intellectual matter. The way of seeing is a lived concrete view in the Dzogchen teaching.

OK, we've talked about the base. And then as regards the path, we've talked about the first component which is a fundamental one, the way of seeing or view. You mustn't think today "Why, he's given a long talk and he didn't say anything of practical use." In the Dzogchen teaching, we say that meditation is not the principal matter. Understanding is the principal matter, to understand the base, to understand the way of seeing and how way of seeing works.

Nor in Dzogchen does practice always mean going into some cave and closing yourself up there, but rather, knowing how one's condition is, and learning how one can best collaborate with oneself. For which reason, this long talk is very

useful.

And now let's rest a bit. Then we have to see a bit how our timetable can work out. We can also have during the day a period of yantra yoga and then another period for more teaching and explanation and also some practice together. Who knows the timetable here? It's a matter of fitting in with the lunch hour and so forth.

[Friday afternoon, 16-Jul-82]

Now we'll talk a little bit about practice. And as practice we'll talk a bit specifically about the methods of the Upadesha teachings. First of all, the practice of the Upadesha in all traditions and all variants employs first of all a set of practices called the khorde rushan ('khor-'das ru-shan). In truth, the practice of the khorde rushan is considered like the base for beginning. Some traditions refer to it with a kind of ngondro (sngon-'gro) of practice, that is, as a preparation.

But here too, you have to understand what its function is, that is, why it works and how it works. We're not just talking about the normal kind of preparation that's done. It's a preparation for taking us into contemplation. As a preparation for contemplation it's necessary. It is indeed indispensable that we understand well that there's a distinction between the mind and the nature of the mind.

As we normally live, all of us, our body, our energy, our mind is all agitated. It's like a water that's muddied and mixed with dirt. In such a state, you can't easily understand what's meant by nature of the mind. For example, if one has to begin in a state of calm of mind, one doesn't find any way to arrive at it.

For this reason, there exists what's called the khorde rushan. In Tibetan, khorde: khor means transmigration and de ('das) means the beyond, or what we have also called nirvana. Rushan means to separate. It doesn't mean that we separate from something external to us, as if it were an object. Nor is it separation of the two, an intellectual understanding and distinction between what is transmigration and what is nirvana.

The truth is that the opposition of samsara and nirvana is a dualistic opposition. And when we speak of dualism, one of the most extreme dualities, dichotomies of dualism, is the difference between those two. In our practice, we have a commitment "redog dang dralwa" (re-dogs dang bral-ba); we speak of hope and fear, hope and worry or anxiety. And this kind of dualism, this kind of split, goes also into practice as soon as there's a practice. There's the hope of realization and there's the fear of transmigration.

So this is explained in the teachings when we talk about what a real commitment involves. What we commit ourselves to, right from the beginning, is to find ourselves beyond those two, beyond that duality. So, we're not operating with the notion that one accepts or seeks realization, refusing samsara.

But where are these two found at bottom? This duality is found at bottom in us, in our own condition. What we call transmigration or samsara is found above all in our own existence and above all in our minds. And that which we call

realization, or nirvana, or the beyond, is above all found in the nature of our minds. Now we're trying to find a way to live that distinction, to understand deeply, really grasp, what distinguishes them.

And this practice of the rushan is done through many different methods. And these practices, above all, are based on, have their root in, the root tantra of the Upadesha, the Drathaljur (sgra-thal-'gyur). All of the systems of the so-called Nyingthig are based in fact on this Tantra. And then also as was said this morning, there are some other methods that come from some other Tantras.

One of the practices of the rushan that we do is the purification of the six lokas. This is a system of practice, of rushan, that's done not only in the Upadesha of Dzogchen teachings, but also exists in the Semde series. As I said this morning, the tradition, the teaching of Upadesha, given in the texts of Yadam Rampa (??) and Guru Chewang (??) is very, very ample, profusely detailed. This is to give an idea.

What's important in this purification of the six lokas? We know that in principle we're talking about being perfected, self-perfected, from the very beginning, but in practical fact, impeded by obstacles of many kinds. We've explained karmic vision as a kind of condensation, or ice, and we've said that the ice has to melt. We've said that it not only has to be removed, it has to be in some way transformed, And that until we successfully remove the prime causes, what we do is to, as skillfully as possible, avoid the secondary causes. This is how we usually speak of the way of facing and dealing with karma.

Many people very often when they speak of karma imagine that it's something already pre-ordained. And many people attach themselves to karma because that's quite convenient to lay the blame there. That's not very perfect, because there's no such thing as a karma that's already right from the start completely pre-constituted and worked out. Rather, the individual has many karmas, many karmic causes, both positive and negative. But through the maturation of these karmas and their having their consequences, one can generate many, many new karmic causes.

But karma can never mature and produce consequences unless the secondary causes and circumstances are there. And those secondary causes, circumstances, depend very much on the individual's awareness and consciousness. Let's say as an illustration, if I have ten very important negative karmas that must mature at some point, if I have the secondary causes to bring them to maturity, to ripeness, they can ripen in my life, during my life.

When an individual is not aware, and the secondary causes present themselves, he can have his karmas ripen. But if one says "Ah well, that was my karma. It just had to mature or be used up. There was nothing to be done", that means that the individual is ignorant, or neglectful, of secondary causes and how to cope with them. If I'm conscious about secondary causes, I can very easily block karma from ripening. To impede karma from ripening, to prevent its maturation, doesn't mean that it's gone. Karma is still there.

But here comes another step. If the individual is conscious, he can also completely remove this cause. To remove the cause, to remove karmic causes, one must perform purification. In this case, there are many, many ways of doing purification. There is a Sutric system, for example, where one largely works with the material, physical, body, like Milarepa building the tower for Marpa, and like many practitioners who do many, many prostrations. There are many practitioners who went all the way from Eastern Tibet to Central Tibet by prostrations. So there are ways at this level of conducting purification and accumulating positive causes.

But then there are also methods of purification that make use of slightly greater capacity of the individual. In Tantrism, for example at the Yogatantra level, there is visualization that enables one to prepare oneself to receive and then to obtain purification through Vajrasattva, for example. Visualizing Vajrasattva and then emerging from him a nectar which purifies and washes away all impediments and obstacles. This is a very widely used method for purification because the Yogatantra and the Kriyatantra employ methods that are based above all on purification.

But there are still higher methods, as in the higher Tantras, the Anuttaratantra. For example, purification through visualization of the channels and chakras and through breathing practice, what's called reciting a mantra, whether it be aloud by the voice, or through breathing it, and through working more with one's energy. Thus there exists purification working more with concentration such as the one we've just spoken of, the purification of the six lokas. So there are many, many ways to do purification.

But that which is used in the Dzogchen teaching is considered very efficacious for removing prime causes. One thing very clear is that one uses, above all, teachings of visualization accompanied also by mantra. You can understand when it's said that visualization is accompanied by mantra, we're very much using a system of the Anuttaratantra.

Now when we do this practice, it's not necessary to visualize yourself as transformed into something because this is not a method of the path of transformation. This is a system of the teaching of Dzogchen itself and therefore employs the method of self-liberation. So what one principally does here is one visualizes the symbols of the causes of each of the six lokas.

What are the six lokas? As we said this morning, in each individual there are principal passions, primary passions. These principal passions are capable of producing the dimension of a given karmic vision and of these principal passions, we say that there exist five or six. When we speak of these six lokas, we mean that in each individual there are the causes of each of those six visions or dimensions. When the causes exist, there's always the possibility that the consequences will come, that is, that the person will live in any one of these six karmic visions. These are themselves what we speak of as one's obstacles. So we're seeking to remove these causes.

So we visualize these causes as present in six different points in the body. But since we have our characteristic way

of thinking of good and bad, our habit, the same mental habit applies to above and below. One speaks of going towards that which is above, automatically we associate that as something good. And when one speaks of falling below, one associates that as something evil. So we think of divinities and we think of evil spirits.

In the body too we have a superior half and a lower half, and in Tantrism one speaks at certain points of the correspondence between the human body, the vajra body, and the external world. So, along this principle, one finds the specific locations on the body of these six lokas. If there is something to be cleaned or purified, then there's also the capacity of that which must clean it. The means we use to clean it, to clean these causes, is the three vajras. And the three vajras means the state of the body, voice, and mind. It doesn't mean any material or relative consideration.

And why do we speak of these states as vajra states? Because all such states are equal. They're at the same level. Even though the individual here and now finds himself in transmigrations, the underlying state of the three vajras has never transmigrated. This is why we say in Dzogchen that from the beginning one is what one is. And this fact is the means, this condition of the three vajras is the means, of purification.

The three vajras are always represented with three words, the three words OM AH and HUM. And these are always presented with the OM as white, the AH as red, and the HUM as blue. The white OM represents material things. When we speak of it as a state, it's represented as light. The red AH is represented as energy, and the blue HUM represents the state of the individual, him or herself. And the sounds of these three, the OM AH and HUM are neutral sounds, that is, sounds that govern all sounds.

Why is the OM presented as white like light, the AH as red, that is, energy, and the HUM as blue, that is, emblematic of the state? Because they represent the same principle as what is described in Tantrism as the three energy channels of the body. We speak of the solar and lunar channels. This is the same as when we do the practice of tummo (gtum-mo), the inner heat. We have a symbol of white nectar and of red fire. This too is solar and lunar. Fire represents energy which causes things to ripen and develop and mature. The nectar is like substance and this is how Tantrism presents what it calls method.

So here too, one finds the OM white, the AH red. When we speak of our three ways of existing, we're referring to them as body, the material substance, and voice, that is, energy. A voice is always understood the same as energy. This means it's also linked with our prana, our vital energy. And then the HUM is always presented as blue because blue represents the state and its profundity, its depth, just as Samantabhadra is always presented as blue. So this OM AH and HUM represent the state, the underlying existence of every individual. That's true also for the enlightened ones. And when we come to the teachings of Dzogchen these three words are considered as the essence of every mantra. There's nothing that's not embraced within these three.

So we say the vajra as representing the state. Vajra is generally translated also as diamond. But it doesn't really mean diamond. Of the vajra, we have an explanation, or exposition, of its seven qualities. Stating, for example, that it can't be divided. It can't be cut. It can't be melted or dissolved, and the like. The conclusion of all this is that what's meant by vajra is the state of the individual. Vajra is the same as what's meant by the word Tantra. Tantra is the same, its real meaning is the same, as that which we call the nature of the mind. And that too corresponds, in a certain sense, to what's called in Dzogchen teaching the primordial state or primordial condition. So these three vajras, that is, these three aspects of our underlying state, exemplified, or given an emblem, in the OM AH HUM become the means for purifying our karmic causes.

What is to be purified are six different things. And there are two different ways to utilize this method. Some traditions have always used six words as symbols of the six lokas and some traditions utilize only six beads of different color. If one doesn't know the Tibetan words, it's much easier to utilize the colored beads.

Why do they normally use words? Because for a Tibetan seeing these Tibetan words, or for one who knows the words seeing the words, you know immediately what they mean. And these words are the first words or letters of the names of those given lokas. The word loka you'll remember refers to the dimension, universe, of that karmic vision. There are locations at the forehead, on the throat, at the heart, and so forth. When we visualize the letters, the word letters, we visualize for example the white AH at the forehead as a symbol of the god realm.

When we call them divinities or gods, that's a very generic term. We use the same word, divinities or gods, to refer for example to manifestations of the Sambhogakaya. You must not confound these two very different uses of the word. Here we're talking about purifying a karmic cause. A manifestation of the Sambhogakaya is not determined by karmic causes. When we speak of a divinity who has arisen through karmic causes, we always say worldly divinity, getempa (??). Even if this seems a powerful and important deity, when it's a result of worldly causes, the consequences will always emerge sooner or later. The price will be paid.

Everyone understands how this all works if you ever play that game, that Tibetan game, which is widely spread, "Rebirth". You get an exact idea of how the system functions. Sometimes playing the game you become a very important deity. Two moves later, you're in hell. It's quite a surprise. You think "Gee, I'm a very important deity," but that doesn't help you. This is what's meant by saying that it's a karmic condition and all of the consequences still keep happening.

Now an individual can have all of the causes of all six lokas. And there are people who have perhaps not one cause, but the cause of many different lokas. Now he's a human being and is living in the human dimension, but we don't know where, or how, afterward when he's lost the human vision, he'll find himself.

Many people have the notion that if you become human,

you're not going to experience rebirth as another kind of being. Or people say "Well, we're so highly developed, how is it possible to fall back into the condition of, say, an animal?" But there's no reason, no grounds, for saying the human being is so highly developed if he hasn't done anything valid with this human birth. A human being can seem very developed and very intelligent indeed, but at death, lose his substance. After death, he may only bear a trace of humanness until he enters once again a dimension because the secondary causes are present.

Those of you who've read a bit in the Tibetan Book of the Dead about the bardo of existence, you find it said that for several weeks after death, one continues to believe oneself human, but that being may already no longer be human. This means that he bears simply the trace of having been human. Just as when we've been worried about and much involved in some situation, in our dreams thereafter, there are traces of that situation. So for a few days, it may continue like that.

Then it's written, when one begins to be surrounded by the secondary causes, a new different dimension, one begins a kind of foreseeing of what kind of being one will become. If you read the Book of the Dead, there's a very clear explanation of all this. This means that when one seizes upon the secondary causes, one brings to maturity, one ripens, the prime cause which had already existed.

An individual possesses many prime causes, but there's no rule at all which says which of these will mature first, that the first one will ripen first, and the second one second, anything of that kind. All of that depends entirely on the arising of secondary causes. Let's say that on a table have been placed ten different pieces of iron. Some are tiny. Some are big. And they're all distributed in different locations on the table. If for some reason, a magnet is present, it will pull that which is before it, but there is no rule as to which of the pieces of iron there will be first seized by a magnet.

So, an individual has many prime causes, but they mature and ripen when the secondary causes are present, the specific circumstances. And all of these are called karmic causes. So there are causes for what we call the god existence, for human existence. There are causes for existence as the asuras, that is, the demi-gods, and there are causes for birth as animals, the causes for the existence as preta, or hungry ghost, and also causes for the existence as hell beings. Usually we speak of five or six principal ones.

Why five or six? You recall that we have five or six principal passions. Now, the first of these, the most important to deal with, are causes for hell vision because it's easiest to accumulate this cause. The cause of rebirth in the hell vision is rage, wrath, getting angry. Since it takes no deep study or philosophical development to get angry, it's not very hard to get angry. So, we all practice this all the time and this becomes a rich and abundant vision. So when we purify that, we're doing something very important because each individual has an awful lot of that cause.

Now while we're speaking here of six lokas, we're not talking about some kind of geography of hells. We're talking

of causes. Because we know when an individual possesses the causes, then these causes can always ripen into the given vision, or dimension, of karmic vision. Somebody says "Now, just where is this hell dimension?" There's no way you can define where it is found, particularly since we are human beings now. Sometimes people say "Hell is found beneath the earth," or something of the kind.

In Tibet, there's the story, the epic of Gesar. And Gesar is a kind of Tibetan King Arthur. Sometimes it seems that he did historically exist. Sometimes it doesn't seem true. But in any case, it's extremely engrossing reading in Tibetan. And certain masters have written stories and histories of Gesar that link him with the teachings, because the way of the teachings is always to make use of whatever people are interested in to explain and clarify. And since in Tibet everybody read and was much involved with the story of Gesar, so for this reason there's also a text of Gesar's voyage to hell.

And it's called Dzogpa Chenpo (rdzogs-pa chen-po), Dzogchen. Because at the end of this journey through hell, explanation is given, extensive explanation is given, of Dzogchen, of the great perfection. And this story begins as a very human idea because if this isn't done, if this isn't told as a very human story, people aren't interested. People know Gesar as a hero, and when he meets some foe, first he sings his song. Then he kills it. And this creates a kind of impression, has an effect. And so this particular text narrates the situations in that way to create interest and involve the reader.

It's said that Gesar went to India to do a practice which would produce infinitely long life. While he was practicing, he left behind his mother in Tibet. His mother sickened, and old as she was, died. Gesar was informed of this by a dakini and she told him "Your mother is dead, but not only is she dead, she's arrived in hell." Gesar immediately became agitated. "How is this possible?" he said. "I've done well for other beings all my life?" And he immediately saddled his horse. And this was of course a miraculous horse. And with lightning speed, he proceeded to hell.

And it's said that hell was located just a bit below Mount Everest, because that's a very high mountain and nearby is Lake Manusarva (?). It's said to be a very, very cold lake, so cold, that even though hell lies below it, it doesn't heat up. So that's where he went. And when he encountered Yama, the king of hell, Gesar of course drew his sword. He said "You've committed an injustice. I've offered all of my life for the benefit of others. And you drag my mother down here to hell. And you'd better explain the reason, partner. If you don't explain and make it very, very clear, I'll find out the reason why."

And immediately Yama too began to sing his combat song and replied "You have killed many, many people, although you may have considered that the benefit of others and the benefit of the teachings. But negative karmic causes have to be paid off one by one. You're the son. You accumulated all this negative karma and your mother is going to pay the price. Your mother has given her life for you." Gesar tries to reason

with him further but Yama can't be convinced.

So Gesar says "Well then, I'll show you" and he takes his sword and he tries to chop off the head of Yama, the lord of death, as he'd always successfully done with others. But when he strikes this blow, it is written "It wasn't the head of Yama which fell, it was Gesar's own head which fell off." Gesar throws his head back on and sings his combat song again. And then Yama explains cause and effect and the whole law of karma. To which Gesar replies, singing ferociously, about going beyond cause and effect. It's quite entertaining. And everybody reads that book, and reading it, one learns a great deal about the teachings.

So there are explanations given and considerations offered that would treat the lokas as geographical places, and hell as some kind of geographical location. But that's not really what's involved in understanding the lokas. We can describe human vision in terms of its geography and spatiality for us, but if an individual finds himself in the dimension of the pretas, for example, for that being, this human geography just isn't the case. And the same is true of the karmic vision we call hell vision.

So what we're really talking about principally is the cause. When the cause exists, we can guarantee that the karmic vision of each of the six lokas does exist. So we learn what causes arise through what passions and to what karmic vision each of these passions corresponds. For example, for the divinities the cause is always considered as pride. As a symbol, we concentrate on the white AH. This is not the same as the white AH that we often utilize in practice of Dzogchen. In the practice of the six lokas, we visualize these lokas as colored letters, but not as luminous colored letters. Whereas the letters symbolizing the three vajras are luminous because they symbolize power, the capacity to act and to purify.

Then we concentrate at the throat, or in some traditions at the back of the neck. We concentrate on the letter SU and its color is green. If you don't know the letter, that's not important. As we said, you can also concentrate on a kind of green bead.

Then at the heart, that is, at the center of the body, we have the symbol of human vision. The letter is NRI or a blue bead. We spoke of the loka at the throat, the bead is green. The cause is jealousy. And the cause of human rebirth is said by many sources to be the union of all of the passions, whereas, others once again attribute it to pride. You may think of human birth as something precious and important. If we remove that cause, then there's no further any possibility of being reborn as human. But this doesn't mean that one can't be reborn. This means that what's being removed is the obligatory rebirth due to karmic causes. Voluntary rebirth is a totally other matter.

Then towards the navel, there's the cause of rebirth as an animal and the cause of that is ignorance. Here we have the letter TRI and its color is red, or a red bead. And then at the base of the trunk of the body, on a grey bead, or the letter PRE, as in the word preta, still a grey color, and it's the symbol of the cause of the preta vision. And that's

principally attachment and greed. Then under the foot, at the sole of the foot, or you visualize the letter DU which is brown in color, or a brown bead, which is the symbol of the cause of hell vision. And these are what is to be purified.

Then normally you visualize them one by one. It's easiest to start with the AH, but the most important to purify is the DU, the cause of hell vision at the feet. But whenever one has to do a visualization, working with something up at the head is always easier. Because at the head we have what are called the gates of the five senses, and all of our sensory contact tends to happen towards the head area. So, presence, the immediacy of sensation, is always easier to have near the head area.

And then going down, towards the heart, there's less sensation than at the head. Going down to the soles of the feet, it's still more complex. So this visualization gets developed from the head down to the soles of the feet. So in this way, visualizing in this way, it's easier to make the visualization concrete. But in terms of the importance of the visualization, and therefore also time given, the most significant is the base, the visualization at the lower levels.

And there are two methods to perform the purification. One involves purifying them through visualizing these lokas, these causes one by one, and purifying them with the OM AH HUM. Let's say for example, that you've concentrated on the white AH, or a white non-luminous bead. At the same time as you visualize this dull white bead at the forehead, you also visualize the white OM, the red AH, and the blue HUM, the three vajras.

In that bead, in this method, you visualize the OM AH and HUM, the white OM at the higher part of the bead, the red AH at the center, the blue HUM in the lower section of the bead. When you've got these three clearly visualized, you begin to sound the OM AH HUM and slowly, slowly, you remove all of that white bead so that the light can shine forth from the OM AH HUM. And you do this, you see the OM AH HUM in them. You sound the OM AH HUM. You let the bead disappear and the OM AH HUM shine forth at each of the six lokas from the forehead down to feet. This is one method.

Then there's another method. You visualize the beads at each of the locations, or you visualize the lokas either as the letter or as the bead. Now you visualize them specifically as being at the surface of the body. Whereas, more towards the center, more within the body, you have white OM at the head, the red AH at the throat, but within. And you have the blue HUM at the heart, but within, more to the center.

So first of all, you visualize the white AH. And when your visualization is clear, you begin to sound the OM AH HUM. And while you're sounding that, from the inner OM AH and HUM, come rays of light which purify that white AH. There are ways of doing this purification reciting OM AH HUM many many times. And there are other traditions of the masters which don't give that much importance to so much quantity.

For example in the Longchen Nyingthig, Jigmay Lingpa counsels the practitioner to do each of these visualizations for

an entire bum (bum). But in another case like the Khacha rangdrol (??) of the master of my master, Nyagla Padma Dudul, it's not quantity so much as the precision of correspondence between visualization and sound at the same time, because these are two somewhat different ways of seeing.

When we speak of the quantity of a mantra, this is a bit linked with the tradition of Tantrism. But in the true Dzogchen teaching it isn't quantity that counts. Because the real condition of energy is beyond quantity. One must find oneself in that dimension, and that's more important than quantity. But if one says OM AH HUM even two or three times, what is important is that one finds oneself in that.

So one does this gradually, that is, for each location visualizes and brings to bear the rays from the OM the AH and the HUM. But when you're feeling pretty good about these upper locations, then you've got to repeat and repeat the work at the lower locations. But when you repeat, you have to repeat the visualization again. You may think "With the OM AH HUM, I've purified that. I've cleared that visualization. There's nothing now to purify." It may seem so but that's not the case in practice. In practice you can repeat it all you want. If you can feel your real clarity developing, it may indeed be the case that the causes are diminishing. So you do it one by one down to the soles of the feet.

And then you do them altogether, non-gradually, all at once. And with that, you can do it sounding the OM AH HUM very repeatedly. At this point, without any limitations, the rays of light coming from the three vajras, are reaching all six of the locations. And you can repeat this as often as necessary.

When you do such a purification of the six lokas, you may also experience certain signs, such as for example through dreams. When it's a practitioner who already has a certain knowledge of contemplation, if one does such a purification, one may also find many nyams of purification. Nyams meaning experiences lived in practice. One has to see through these signs if some things have worked in bettering you.

But in any case, the purification of the six lokas is not merely some kind of preparation. It's something that you can do at anytime. As long as the human being lives in this material body, it means there are always human causes, causes for human birth. And we don't know beyond that how many causes may also exist. If you do an enormous amount of purification, it's always better. It can never be too much. So it's a practice that you must do as a general rule whenever you feel like doing it.

Even if you've fully mastered contemplation, this practice is still valid. And then also a practitioner may find that he's called upon to give help to others. There are people who come to you and say "Now my mother. She's not interested in the practice. I, yes. But she, no. I feel the need to do something for her. What can I do?" Or for example if someone who was very close to you and whom you much cared for is dead, "I want to do something for that person. What can I do?"

In these cases, the most that you can do is something like purification. If one does a purification and does it

well, you may be able to give a cause to that individual. And if that individual doesn't have so much need of a cause, because he already possesses other greater causes, it's still can contribute to the diminishing of obstacles and the creation and development of greater clarity in that person.

If you're called upon to help, in what way can you do so? You must remember how we do the transfer. When I do the transfer of myself, I transfer my consciousness outside of me. That is, I visualize something, or I haven't visualized anything at all, ... or if I was fixing on him to bring his consciousness out of his body, you can't concretely realize that. To accomplish something concrete here, something true, one has to have the capacity for reintegration. And in this case that means integration of my state with that of the person who I must help. In that case it's very, very possible also to transfer consciousness. Purification is done at that level.

If one knows how to do this, there's always an enormous advantage for the person being helped. Certainly we're talking about purification. It doesn't mean you can turn somebody into an enlightened being. That doesn't exist. The Buddha himself said "I give you the way. I show you the way. Realization depends on you." No master, no mahasiddha, is in a position to illuminate somebody by miracle.

But the miracle is performed when somebody is interested in the teaching, follows the teaching, becomes involved with the teaching. Then that's something that's happening between both he who follows and the teacher who communicates it to him. Doing purification of the six lokas also happens in this way. And now we finished the explanation of the purification of the six lokas.

I wonder if we're in a position to do the practice or not now. It's perhaps better that we do the practice tomorrow before the teaching. Now we have that famous tea. And then we'll do yantra yoga.

[Saturday morning, 17-Jul-82]

As explained yesterday, first of all, the practice of the purification of the six lokas. We'll do a little of this together now. In any case when we say a retreat, that means doing some practice. It's not just that I talk. Moreover it's important that you understand the principle of what a retreat is. If we speak of a course, something or other, that's different than a retreat. A course may also serve to deepen one's knowledge of something or other. But a retreat is not offered just for intellectual knowledge. That you could certainly do at the university perfectly well.

When one does a retreat, one goes to a silent place where there's opportunity to do something. That means learn something in practice and to apply it. But that doesn't mean just a chance to get away for a few days from the city. But many people have the notion that a retreat is an opportunity for escape in some way. People think "What a complicated life we normally live." And they think that to get away for two or three weeks to a tranquil place is a great rest. And they think that hopefully the mind can find a little peace in such circumstances.

But in principle of course that doesn't change anything, because it can be even worse after the two or three weeks to go back again. Retreat is rather an opportunity to learn how to live when you go back, and how to live better when you return. Above all it's an opportunity to better and deepen our consciousness. And practice too must be based on this principle.

If we do a purification, that's to better our consciousness. Bettering our clarity and developing our clarity, that should help to make our daily life a little simpler. It's quite certain that nobody is going to resolve all their problems or achieve definitive realization thanks to a two or three week retreat. But it all depends above all on our daily living, and the retreat points to that.

We know that there are many people who also do for example retreats three years in length. But there are also people who do longer retreats than that, for example, seven years. Many of those people come back at the end of the retreat the same person they were when they left, which means that it's not such an easy thing to do. Because one mustn't live totally, nor too much, in fantasy.

But rather one has to learn something that's useful in living. And an example of that would be to know how to actually make use of some practices in daily life. And this too mustn't remain just an intellectual knowledge, but something that's applicable, that's usable. This is the principle of the retreat that we're doing. A retreat is exactly a preparation for living. And above all, it's aimed at provoking real consciousness, that one not remain in some idea of knowledge. Because when a person remains among ideas, in practice there's no result. And one remains a follower of ideas or something like forms.

Tibetans speak of this as being like the nose of the dog. A person may have followed certain masters for many years, or some teaching. But if one stops to actually observe oneself in one's real condition, one finds that nothing has changed.

This is what's meant by remaining a bit like the nose of the dog. When a dog is born, if it has a black nose or a white nose, that's how that nose stays forever. The dog's hair or fur may change color in the course of the seasons, but the nose doesn't know any seasonal differences. Very often it happens this way.

One pursues and follows a teaching, but our actual condition doesn't correspond to what the teaching communicates. If one is to deepen one's intellect, let's say one is a university professor, one has to find many many themes and points to make. And one has to know how to use many words as complicatedly as possible. And this gains one the reputation of a scholar. In such a case one can study very very much, and read many many books. Because it may be your fate that until you're very old and no longer can do it, you have to teach. And you have to find something to say. And this constant study makes your work, your product, ever more elegant. But the goal there is to work, stay at your job. And that intellectual acquisition lasts only as long as you're alive.

We don't believe that when you've acquired many many words and concepts, you then use them in the bardo, or that they'll be ready for you for the next life. On the other hand we do say that if a person has perfected certain practices and developed certain capacities through practice, then these will be available for a next life. So the implication is one should not waste this existence. When we consider something a teaching, what we consider a teaching has as its purpose the awakening of the individual. One doesn't awaken the individual by applying a logic of the "2 plus 2 makes 4" type.

So it's very very important to know that we have to go into practice. To go into practice, as we said a bit while talking about the way of seeing, you have to first of all observe yourself. If you don't discover your own condition, then the whole thing is falsehood. If the whole effort is falsehood and inauthentic, all you're doing is fooling yourself. And when life ends, you've obtained or achieved nothing at all. So we have to work a little in practice, and not just remains with forms and ideas.

For example when we study something, we always proceed with a given theme and a text to examine. But proceeding in that way, we don't get to the real meaning of anything. When I was twelve or thirteen years old, I started to study the Prajnaparamita, the Lankavatara Sutra. And the first time I studied both it and many many commentaries. It didn't seem very hard to me. Then the second time I studied it, I found it more complicated. The third time I studied it with another master with other commentaries. It seemed much more complicated still. Then after I finished college, I studied it one more time.

Certainly I studied it very very well as far as the words went. If someone asks me about it, I have a great deal to say. Because four times I learned everything that had been said in many many commentaries about every single word of that Sutra. If I have to talk about even a single page of it, I can go on for an hour. Thus it was considered that I had studied that Sutra very well and knew it very well.

When I had genuinely finished studying this text four times, I thought to myself "Well where does this text arrive at? I know what all the analyses of its arguments are." But I concluded that I hadn't understood a thing. Many times I asked my college teacher and other professors what the conclusion, what the arrival point, of the text was. They too would explain to me all the fundamental arguments and theses of this text. But these analyses of the arguments and of the structure didn't satisfy me, because there had to be some conclusion, somewhere he was getting. And this the way our intellectual study always is. You can deepen your examination. You can jabber about the subject endlessly. But it always remains a bit far from the truth.

For which reason in the Dzogchen teaching, we always say that the first thing is self-observation. The Dzogchen teaching, even if there's an ample and rich exposition, the point is never to create a school or to propound a philosophic doctrine. The teaching must function perfectly as a mirror. And the principle of the mirror is to reflect yourself. The teaching is not to be considered as two eyes, or two eyeglass lenses, for looking out. It's to be considered as a mirror. It doesn't serve for judging, or analyzing, or commenting on, something external to you, but for observing yourself.

In this way you discover really what the teaching means and is about. In this way you finally understand that things don't just end with externals. We always are finding ourselves in a kind of contradiction. If I do this, then that won't work out. You liberate yourself from all that. Because the teaching has to function, has to work, concretely to liberate the individual. This is fundamental in the teaching of Dzogchen. It's the first thing and you have to remember it always, what we call the way of seeing.

I've repeated this hundreds and hundreds of times, because I know that many many people do not understand it. Certainly it's easy to understand as words, or in words. But understanding the words is just one more way of intellectually grasping things. That is easily understood, and can easily be repeated, just like parrots do. Parrots can even learn prayers. They can learn to repeat splendid discourses. But that doesn't mean that they've understood anything in practice. So that what they've learned doesn't correspond to the real exigencies and circumstances of living.

So it's very important first of all to understand the way of seeing. Above all, people who have read many books, such as books of Buddhist philosophy, and they have ideas about Madhyamika, Yogachara, and the like, and they know the analyses of the two truths, and they know about the four noble truths and the like, the true knowledge remains very very far from that.

Many years ago I went once to Switzerland. And there are many young Tibetans there. And every year these young Tibetans sponsor a lecture, have a kind of conference, a kind of meeting. And that year they had invited a monk from the Tibetan monastery in Switzerland, Rikong ??, to give this lecture at their annual conference. And that monk came and spoke and explained for more than two hours. I was present. He gave a beautiful speech. It was a perfect example of a

kind of speech or lecture that's given in the monastic colleges. He used all of the habitual terms of Buddhist philosophy. I know these words. And you could see that he presented himself, and presented them, very well indeed. From the scholarly point of view, you could say he gave an excellent lecture.

But these poor young Tibetans hadn't understood even a single thing. And everybody was totally bored. That evening we went downstairs where there's a kind of dance hall. You can be quite sure the monk didn't come down to that dance hall... [tape gap] ... completely other type of person. I went down there to drink and to dance, and to have contact with these young Tibetans which was something quite natural.

So first of all we danced for more than a half hour. And then we began to drink a bit of beer. And I asked many of them "What did you understand today of that lovely speech that was given?" And everyone of them answered "I didn't understand a thing. Zero." And I asked them "Well, do you have any minimum interest in the teaching and the philosophy of Buddhism?" And they all replied "Certainly. Yes. They were very interested. They'd love to know something." Because they had always heard that the Buddhist teaching was the very basis of Tibetan culture, their own culture.

But they said "It's hopelessly difficult to try to understand it. Leave alone the significance. Just take the terms used" they said. "Incomprehensible." I asked them "But didn't you learn something about it at school in India?" They said they had learned to repeat some words. But they didn't even know what the words meant, now that some of them could speak and repeat the words just to hear how they sound. I said "Well maybe it isn't really all that difficult. Maybe there's something there that could be understood."

And so we began to talk a little in a more normal way over a glass of beer. And I explained a bit about, let's say, the importance of Buddhism and the history of Tibet, and the ways in which religion in Tibet is linked also to the ancient usages of the Bonpo religion. And I explained to them the way the principle of religion is linked to spirit of the individual. And that religion doesn't simply exist to declare itself a religion and to create monasteries and other institutions. This way these young people began to listen and began to hear.

So we were in one corner of that dance hall drinking beer, and from minute to minute the crowd of people there grew more dense. At a certain moment I saw that almost nobody was dancing anymore. And it turned automatically into a kind of lecture. And there were lots of questions and I gave lots of answers. And we continued talking until four in the morning. I personally drank thirteen bottles of beer. Never in my life have I drunk so much beer. But I was working for those young Tibetans. And they were all very satisfied.

So they demonstrated that at bottom they really did have an interest. But they don't know. Because everything that is presented to them, and everything they make contact with, is totally confined within an intellectual form. And it's still like that, and Tibetan education has always been and remains like that. Today many of the youth don't know, and are far

from, the teaching.

On one occasion when two young Tibetans came from Switzerland to visit me, not two people considered spiritual in any way, but they were for fifteen days with me, when they returned home they had become maximally interested in the teaching and had also learned a great great deal of yantra. This is an example that any individual, whoever he or she may be, can easily become interested in the teaching.

But in general individuals don't receive, and are not received with, genuine transmission of the teachings. If an individual doesn't have that kind of communication, what possibility has he? And then again the possibility is made very slim, very difficult, by what are presented in society as institutions. Institutions always present themselves in the most elegant, but also the most confining box-like, way possible. When an institution is so closed, it necessarily doesn't communicate what it's supposedly there to communicate. And this why we find ourselves very separate from, very far from, the truth of the teachings.

In Tibet for example, when we were there, the masters who taught a teaching like Dzogchen were very very few and difficult to find. If one were a prestigious scholar in an important position, even if that person himself were knowledgeable about Dzogchen and practiced, he would teach in a completely different way. That is, while practicing Dzogchen privately, he would teach in the way that was requested and demanded by the institutional situation.

We could take an example like the well known Tomo Geshe Rinpoche (??), not the one who goes by that name now, but the real one, who lived along the border of India and Tibet. It's now in geography books and on maps as a zone that's called Yatung ???. In that area there's a Gelugpa monastery called Tunkha ?? monastery, and there was a master who was a Gelugpa geshe (dge-shes). A geshe is a high scholarly title. He was also a practitioner. And we don't know how he received the Dzogchen teaching. But we do know that he very much practiced the Dzogchen teaching. And he had many western disciples as well. But he never taught, neither to his Tibetan students nor his western ones, Dzogchen. He always taught in the classical style of the Gelugpa school. All of his life he practiced Dzogchen clandestinely.

Why did he do that? This wasn't true only of him. It was true of many many people in all of the schools, many of whom lived in the monasteries. And this secrecy was one way of defending their position. If one speaks out and explains the Dzogchen teaching, that obviously doesn't correspond to the structure and interests of the institution. And that would naturally provoke many many people to enmity against such an individual. And he wouldn't have much prestige or importance.

We know how to get ahead in this world. Even if you don't believe a word of it, you have to pretend to believe it. If you know how to pull that off, it means you've mastered worldly behaviour. And this is favorable for your rank and prestige, for your position. So many masters of Dzogchen are hidden in this fashion. Then again there were many masters of Dzogchen who at one point lived in the monasteries, but then fled to live in the mountains or in the villages.

It's very important to understand this situation very well. This means that our true knowledge does not correspond to intellect and its institutions. We're not saying that one has to renounce all intellectual study or contact with institutions. That's not the principle. Because the Dzogchen teaching doesn't ask you to renounce anything at all. It's not necessary to make any renunciation. But you have to be conscious. If something's white, you have to understand that it's white. If something's black, you have to understand that it's black. When you understand the condition or situation, then you can find yourself at its very center.

So when we enter into practice, we always proceed on the basis of consciousness, of awareness. For example they speak very much in Buddhism of preciousness of human birth, of the sense of impermanence. They speak of the inevitability of suffering. They speak of the law of karma and cause and effect. And these are spoken of as the four awarenesses, and they're present in our situation. That is, we have a sense of presence, we have a knowledge, of how things are, that this is our condition. When one knows how things are, then one can find a way of living with them. And this is the key to what we call living the teaching in daily life. While one doesn't really understand how things are, and doesn't have this immediate and active awareness, then one is obliged to renounce many things.

Also as regards practice, if you're doing a practice, you have to understand why you're doing it. You have to know why it works and how it works. And to understand how and why it works, and its goal, what is attained, you have to understand the condition of the individual as such. As we've many times said, it's not enough that something be decided by somebody. We're used to saying "Ah, things are thus and so. Why? Because such and such a master said that's the case", as if we could unload all the responsibility on the master. This is testimony of the weakness of the individual.

The individual has to find out what his own condition is, and to live in his condition and think for himself. If he's eating some food, he has to understand himself whether that's good for him or bad for him. To just eat away trusting someone else, without knowing what food it is that I'm putting in my body, is not the right procedure.

And the same is true of a practice, that is, I have to know what the principle is, what it is I'm doing with myself. Or as we've also many times said, one mustn't lack confidence in oneself. One mustn't have so much mistrust of one's own perception. If one observes and discovers one's own condition, one can faith in oneself and one's own perceptions. And this is the basis for discovering how to cooperate and collaborate with yourself, to give yourself a hand.

Then at last you can learn techniques of practice and apply them. If you haven't learned in this way and in this spirit, then no matter how many techniques of practice you may learn and apply, without understanding what they're for, what it is you're doing with yourself, why they exist, then whatever you're doing is not going to have any very important result.

So we've learned that there's a way of doing the

purification of the six lokas. We've also discussed why it's important, in what ways it's important, what it is about. So now if everybody has understood that, we can do a little practice together here. You must remember the six principal points. These six locations, six points, also have an explanation from the Tantric point of view.

For example when we sleep at night, at times strange dreams come. And a dream may come not from our clarity. And it may also not arise from our anxiety or worry, or from our karmic traces. For example I'm sleeping and I dream of a big elephant. Sometimes it's said that dreams give us an indication. And so we try to interpret the dream. But this means above all that there's some linkage with our clarity. But sometimes dreams are linked with our karmic traces indicating what will come. But it is considered in Tantrism that some of our dreams are linked to our way of uniting our body and our prana, our vital energy.

For example, when we do a practice of concentration, we place the prana through concentration and visualization, concentrate or accumulate prana, in a given part of the body. For example, to master the prana, we may visualize it as present at the chakra of the navel. And it's considered that when we concentrate on, and fix on, that given chakra, it's there that the prana tends to accumulate and unify. And also it's there that the functioning of our senses tends to locate or centralize, when it vanishes into us, as for example in sleep. So this dream arising through the unification of the functioning of the senses and of prana in a given place, is a general function.

Then again there are sometimes explanations of correspondence between the external world and the world within the body. Even if one hasn't concentrated on a particular point in the body, let's say you've fallen asleep with a certain thought, a given thought that's linked to specific external circumstances. This can influence the inner condition. And from this can arise certain dreams which have a specific characteristic, a specific aspect, having to do with that unification. There are explanations of this kind given in the Tantras. And this gives you some notion of why these points are specified as the locations for the six lokas.

For this practice if you don't know the Tibetan words, you can visualize the beads of various colors. We already said that we use the words because, if you know the words, you have an immediate association with their meanings, and you understand their meanings. If you see the word PRE, you think immediately of the pretas. But if on seeing the gray bead or pellet, if you immediately understand that corresponds to the pretas, then there's no particular need for the word. So you can perfectly well make use of these colored beads.

As we've said, we'll begin with visualization at the forehead of a dull white bead. A person who's a bit trained in visualization, who has no difficulty with visualization, can also do the exact opposite, can begin from the feet rather than from the head. Because in actual fact it's more important to purify the base. But if you're not accustomed to visualization, and are not expert at it, it's much easier to begin from the head and go down. And how your visualization

is, is something that you can sense, you can perceive, as you proceed from the head down.

Remember that when you have well visualized this white bead or letter at the forehead, when you've got it clearly in view, then you begin with the OM the AH the HUM. And normally when we utilize the OM AH and HUM, they're united. This is in sounding it. It's all united. If you think it's very important how many you do, and if you think it's very important to count the number, then you would separate them just a little in order to keep track. You'd say "OM AH HUM" and then a space, and then "OM AH HUM".

But if on the other hand, you know how to unify the sound with breathing and the functioning of prana, and you unite this above all with your immediate awareness of the concentration, with your presence of the concentration, then you sound OM AH and HUM united. You slur the OM into the AH, the AH into the HUM, so there's a continu ... [tape gap] ... It's not like reciting a mantra hurriedly without visualization, just getting through it. You do it calmly. You visualize well and clearly.

And then when you're really ready, you sound the OM AH HUM of purification. It's better to do it well. It's as well to do it again, beginning with the OM, going through it, three times, five times, seven times, doing it frequently to get it really down. Above all when you do individual practice on your own, you don't ever limit yourself to a given quantity, a given number of times. It's entirely a question of how you feel. If you feel that to achieve purification you have to more times, you do more times. It's a question of your own feeling.

It's just that when we do a collective practice we have to follow some kind of rule more. We may say, doing collective practice, let's do three times for each loka. This is a way of proceeding that permits us to concentrate together for the same length of time. Or you could begin with three times at the top, and then multiply that as you proceed down. Considering that the white AH or the white bead at the forehead is a less important loka, you might do it three times there. And then at the loka of the throat or the back of the neck, you might do it four times. The heart, five times, so that each location involves more numerous repetitions. Until we get down to the feet, we're continuing to do it gradually.

And then when we've completed the work on all the lokas, we do a certain number of purifications that are not gradual, that is, that involve all the lokas at once. And we could do that a limited number of times when we work together. This is the way we might do it together. When we do any practice together, it's important that we don't visualize different things or for different lengths of time, but that we do some kind of common visualization.

In general, individual practice, non-collective practice, has its advantages, if you're doing something like shinay for example, or if one must find oneself in contemplation. That's much easier to do alone. Because practice has to proceed a bit with the nyams of the individual himself. My nyam or experience may not correspond to your nyam. For example I may use a sounding of the PHAT to take myself into contemplation.

I may use that when I'm disturbed by thought. And after cutting through that disturbance or thought with the PHAT, I may find myself in the state of rigpa. But it's not said then when I'm disturbed by thought, at the same moment the other person is being disturbed by thought. He's sitting there tranquilly in total perfection. I say a loud PHAT and I may disturb him. So in practices like that, the collective situation is not ideal.

But then there are many other types of practice where there are advantages to doing it collectively. Certain types of practice that are linked to visualization, and particularly to visualization that's governed by the use of sounded words, so that the sounded words coordinate the visualization, and where the words also coordinate or govern the phasing and timing of the visualization. So if ten people together doing a visualization to find themselves in a certain state, are all simultaneous, there's a real advantage particularly for the people who are not capable of, who don't succeed at, doing the practice.

There are many types of practice, such as those having to do with respiration, breathing, those having to do with prana, and even some kinds of practice having to do with contemplation, where there's an influence of the others that can help a given person. When we speak of a direct transmission from master to disciple, it means that they both understand the principle, and it's possible for them to work directly together as master and disciple. If there exists this kind of possibility, that one can open oneself to collaboration with the master, then there can also be opening to collaboration in collective practice.

So you have to understand what the advantages are, and that there are advantages, both to collective practice and other advantages to practicing alone. But for this reason a collective practice always has to have its common structure. When we do a practice together there's always a book. In that book it is specified what the way of singing is, what the way of visualizing is, and what the phases are, so that one does things together.

Now we're going to do a bit of practice together, the practice of purification. In any practice we always speak of what the physical position is, what the way of breathing is, and what the way of concentrating mentally is. Why? Because we have a body, a voice, a mind. And we always have to make use of these and adapt ourselves to them. Now as regards a position for the practice of the six lokas, there is no particular position. But when there exists a visualization, and you're going to work on something with the mind, it's necessary that the prana be coordinated.

And to coordinate the prana, the back has to always be straight. Even though there's no specification that one has to be in the lotus position, or on one's knees, or standing, or sitting, what is important is that the back be straight. The back straight is always fundamental for the coordination and balancing of prana, vital energy.

And breathing is linked to the OM AH HUM we'll be sounding. And as long as we're sounding the OM AH HUM, the breathing is deep. Doing this deep breathing creates also the

advantage of coordinating the prana. You've learned, I think, yesterday, a bit of yantra. And in yantra there's first of all a breathing of purification, where you throw out the breathing nine times. And this is the breathing that we do before any type of visualization. We'll first of all do this breathing.

And in continuing, we'll begin the visualization with the white bead. We'll repeat the OM AH HUM, purifying it three times. Then when we get to the asuras, the demigods, we'll do that four times. And when we get to the cause of human birth, we'll do it five times. Six, seven, eight times. All of it gradual, that is, one loka at a time. And then at the end non-gradual, that is, at the very end when all of the lokas have been completed, we'll do the entire body seven times. This is what we'll do. And in this way we'll then finish our practice.

We'll begin with the breathing. White for the gods. Dull white, not luminous. None of these are luminous. They're all dull colors. These bead represent the karmic causes. Green, and it represents the asuras, the demigods. The human cause is blue. The cause of animal rebirth is dull red. The cause of the pretas is gray. And the cause of hell birth, or hell vision, is dull brown. That's what is to be purified. What purifies them is the three vajras, the white OM, the red AH, the blue HUM. And those three are all luminous and shining. The OM AH HUM, the three vajras, are more towards the core of the body, where the lokas are superficial.

[Saturday afternoon, 17-Jul-82]

We're continuing to explain and discuss what's called khorde rushan. And the practice which we did of the purification of the six lokas is also part of the rushan. In general there's a term for the Dzogchen teaching, machopa (ma-bcos-pa) which means "no correction". That is, since there's no correction, no correcting oneself, one finds oneself in the condition of what is. But to let things be in this way is not to be confused with distraction.

Many people when they hear this phrase about "not correcting", imagine that you just let things go, and let happen whatever chances to happen. Letting things chance to happen is always an application of distraction. When, on the contrary, one is not distracted but fully present with an immediate here and now awareness, and in that sense "not correcting", then one is close to the meaning of the word machopa, and gives it its real significance.

A similar term to machopa is nalma (rnal-ma) which means "the condition of something as it is". In Tibetan the word yoga is translated as naljor (rnal-'byor). It's not a completely literal translation, but what it translates is the essential meaning of the term yoga. This word nal in naljor is the same as nal in nalma, and means an uncorrected condition, letting be what is. And jor means one who possesses this knowledge. The ultimate goal of yoga is this.

So another term for Dzogchen is nalma chenpo, that is, the great letting be what is. Another term is machopa chenpo, the great uncorrectedness. Because one can give many names. One can designate it in many ways. And then this consideration of not correcting anything is also applicable, and there is a way to apply it, in the practice of the khorde rushan. It would seem easy. But we're so conditioned, that it turns out not to be simple for us.

If for example you were to say to somebody "Just stay there. Be natural." The person would have no idea how to be natural. He wouldn't know if he was supposed to go to sleep, or sit with his legs crossed, or what. We have no idea of what's natural. Why? Because we've had an education. A western child, as soon as it begins to learn to sit, is taught to sit in a chair. Mother is constantly showing him how he should sit, what to do with his legs, how he should hold his head, and the like. Similarly an oriental child is taught in another fashion, but also how to sit. One enters into a conditioning and never knows what a natural sitting, or a natural way of being, is.

So in regard to all aspects of our body, voice, and mind, it's exceedingly difficult to discover what nature is and what would be natural. By now that unnatural and artificial condition has become something completely familiar. And in the rushan there also exists a way of discovering and uncovering this condition. There's a situation in which one lets happen whatever wants to happen. One lets come whatever behavior wants to come, whether that be action, or movement, or energy, or whatever.

Action is all linked to the mind. And first of all for an individual there arises contact through the senses with the object. The mind when it receives a communication of that

contact then judges it. And when it makes that judgment, body and energy then respond as the mind decides. This is a cycle that we always apply with all our limitations. Many things may arise in the mind. But we treat them as if they were nothing and don't apply them. And if we don't apply things, we then don't have a direct experience of them.

In the khorde rushan we put into action whatever arises in the mind without limitation. "Without limitation" doesn't mean that we can go beyond our condition or go beyond the realistic possibilities that we have. For example if in front of me there's a big fire, the idea might arise of jumping into the fire. But I recognize that that would be going beyond my limitations. And by jumping into the fire, I'd be turned into a kind of beefsteak. I wouldn't have accomplished anything. Why? Because the material body concretely is there. One has to be knowledgeable of this.

One tries to apply any and everything that arises, but without going beyond our concrete and real limitations, our possibilities. The idea may arise of imitating a wolf, a running wolf, a wolf that jumps. And this is an idea that one can have, but it's also something that one can feasibly physically do. But no harm will come of it, because one doesn't in that case go beyond our realistic physical limits. The reality here is that one experiences, one gains an experience of, what are our real limits.

This doesn't mean that one puts into action something false. That falsehood would mean constructing something on the basis of limitation. Let's say I take a position of yantra, or I do a movement of yantra, and don't go beyond that. That's something limited. In that case I'm not discovering anything about my real condition. We're not doing something here that has to follow some kind of example, and need be for example a movement of yantra.

Nor is it said that necessarily one moves. Because one never knows in advance what ideas may arise. I may find, doing this practice, that the delightful idea comes to me of lying there and resting for awhile, or that I don't want to move at all, but I want to scream. So there's no precise formula or recipe for doing this exercise ... [tape gap] ... does whatever comes, lets happen what wants to happen, to discover what our limitations are.

In the Tantra of the Upadesha it is said that one permits oneself to act on what rises in the mind even if one discovers that one is acting out the nature of all of the six lokas. But this means if and as and when this arises. It doesn't mean that you go through the six lokas as if you were following some formula as to what to do.

The motivation here is above all, first of all, to discover our limitations. And secondly, that when one has done this for some time with all of one's body, voice, and mind, one finds oneself tired, exhausted, and may enter a state which is beyond the mind, the workings of normal mind. If one does this to the point of exhaustion, and then lies down to rest, one finds oneself in a state which is beyond our normal conceptual condition of mind. This too is a way of doing what we call the rushan.

And this rushan is linked to the movement of the body, to

voice and breathing, and also above all to mind. But you never go beyond your realistic limits. These limits are not only the limits of the physical body, but also the limits of the situation in which you find yourself. I decide that I want to do this practice among people or near a town, and as a consequence the police pick me up and carry me away. I think that I'm going beyond all limits, but the police don't choose to accompany me beyond all limits. My situation where I actually find myself hasn't changed at all. This is what's meant by being conscious or aware, and one always has to proceed with consciousness and awareness.

Nor is it said that in this rushan that one must only jump or scream. There are many many ways to perform the rushan. And this is why in the Tantra of Dzogchen and in the explanations of the masters, there are many many types of rushan. They give these many different types because they know that human beings live in many many different conditions and situations. At times one is in a situation that permits one also to do this kind of thing for the discovery of one's limits, jumping and screaming. Above all somebody who lives in a country like Tibet, you could continue jumping and screaming for ten days and nobody would say a thing. On the contrary in a western country, you do something like this, you may soon find that you've got quite a problem.

So it may be the most we can do is simply inform you that there exists this way of doing the practice. For example I've explained this rushan many many times to people. But we've never applied it here in the western world. Because it's not that easy. Nor is it obligatory that one do it. There are many other things that one can do. We did, and it's part of the rushan, this morning a very fine practice of the purification of the six lokas.

Again as regard to the rushan, there are practices which we call practices of the body, of the voice, of the mind. And above all as regards what we call the practice of the mind, there are many different systems. So there's no lack of anything.

Most widely utilized in the various and different traditions of the Upadesha are what we call the practice of the body, the voice, and the mind. Because, since our existence is based on these three, one can certainly apply for example a practice like yantra yoga. Nor is it said that one must necessarily do yantra.

What we generally always use is what's called the position of the vajra. The position of the vajra is meant to tire or exhaust the person. It's not a position in which you can comfortably remain for a long time. The purpose of the vajra position is to tire you. And when we do the practice of the vajra, there is normally also explained how to do an accompanying visualization. What is called the vajra position is accompanied by this, that one concentrates on oneself as a vajra.

Many people who don't understand the principle involved here, imagine that this visualization is fundamental. But the visualization is not what's most important. To visualize means to work with the mind. And to work with the mind, effecting a transformation, is part of the system of Tantra.

And that's called the path of transformation. When you have to transform, you have to work with the mind.

But the principle of the Dzogchen teaching is not that. The principle of Dzogchen is to guide you to finding yourself in the state of contemplation. If you're doing a minimum of visualization, its function is solely to bring you to that entry into contemplation. And here when we do the vajra position and visualize ourselves transformed as the vajra, have a sense or presence of being the vajra, the function of that visualization is to serve as protection. And this is adapted from a system of Tantrism.

The principal characteristics of the vajra position: One puts the two hands together like that. And they're shot one against the other. This is not as for doing prostrations. When one does prostrations or pays homage, salutes, one puts the hands in such a way that they're spoken of as a lotus about to open. Here instead there is no space left between the hands, no void at all. Nor are they in a kind of V shape or pyramid shape. They're quite against each other palm to palm. It's well closed.

Then one slowly puts the hands above the head, but not resting on the head. You never rest them. They're above the head in the air. When you're not resting them, then they're slowly going to come forward and sort of bend. You don't let that happen. And why is there this position? To get the arms and elbows well up. If you don't lift the arms well, and don't hold the hands well, then it just stays sort of like that. Instead you don't do that.

Then you put the feet together. The feet are like this. The feet are together and you're standing on the point or the ball of the foot. There's a position in yantra yoga, the dagger position, in which the legs are straighter and you're lifted higher. That's not this position. The vajra position is like this. You try to find the back straight. And you remain in that position as long as possible. While you're doing this, you visualize that you yourself are a blue flaming vajra.

When you're exhausted and can't maintain the position, then you sit yourself down keeping the hands up, and now with the feet in this position. But you don't lower your hands to sit down. You drop. You keep the feet together like this, remembering to keep the hands and arms well up, and you continue to visualize yourself as a vajra, until you just can't anymore.

When the arms and hands are truly very tired, then you let go and relax on the ground. You relax all of body, mind, and breathing. And this is called nalwa, to take yourself to a natural condition. At that point you're not concentrating on the vajra or anything else. You have an immediacy, an awareness or presence, of a state which is not conditioned by the mind.

Then after you've rested a bit, you begin again. You can continue again and again. This is more or less the practice of the vajra body. You have to remember that the object of the exercise is to tire yourself. And when you're tired, then you can notice what is the condition of mind.

We've said the principle is khorde rushan, the

separating out, the sorting out, of samsara from nirvana. But samsara and nirvana are respectively mind and the nature of the mind. And to grasp this as a matter of direct experience is the purpose of this kind of exercise. When you've trained yourself a bit in this way, it later becomes much easier then to enter the state of contemplation.

You might think "Well if the purpose is to tire yourself, there are a lot of different ways you can make yourself tired. You can run a good race. You can go out and hoe the field." It's true that these are activities that will tire you. But the result is a tiredness a little different from what we gain with the position of the vajra. Because the position is determinant for guiding the flow of prana. If we go and hoe the ground, we're not at all sure that the prana is correctly controlled and balanced.

If we're talking about a person who's done a great deal of practice of yantra yoga, and has quite a mastery of prana and of breathing, it's possible that through any kind of movement he can coordinate and guide prana and its balance. But until you have a kind of stabilization of this type of practice, not every kind of movement is yet yantra. So it's not really the same. But it's true that through movement, one can apply this principle of rushan. For which reason I referred to the other way of doing the rushan through that exercise of letting yourself go, of shouting, moving, and the like. This is first of all a practice of the body. And now as regards rushan we've said enough for today.

Now there's a bit of time and I'd like to explain a bit about the red book. I'd like to explain the practice that we're doing these days in the evenings with this red book. We're on page 11. It's the one that's called trojay. There's an illustration, an image, of Vajrasattva, and the Tibetan word in transliteration, trojay. Then we go on to page 12 where begins the text.

The method of practice used here comes from the system of the way of transformation. And at the beginning there's always a practice of Guruyoga, because the Guruyoga is fundamental in the Dzogchen teaching, also in Tantrism. And here this Guruyoga is performed a bit in the style, or following the method, of the path of transformation. The practice begins with the sound of the AH.

And we use this AH whenever there's a manifestation, or the entry into some manifestation, which has to do with our state. Whenever we have to manifest something, our state is manifested as, is visualized as, the letter AH. AH is a neutral sound, and when human beings see a letter that they know, the very form, the very image, provokes the association of its accompanying sound. And that's why we always use this letter AH.

When we sound this AH that's at the top of the page, we concentrate on our state manifesting as this AH, and through or from this AH, expands light in all directions. In that dimension of light, there manifests the Guru, the devas, and the dakinis. By the Guru we mean all of the teachers and masters of all the traditions, and any transmission to which they may be linked. But if an individual has had some particular transmission of some particular teaching, then that

must be centrally featured. But one is absolutely not called upon to limit what one visualizes in some way.

And when we say "the devas", we mean all of the manifestations of the Sambhogakaya. We're not talking about the devas, the divinities or gods, to which we referred when we spoke of the six lokas. We speak of a manifestation of a Sambhogakaya. We're talking about totally realized beings who communicated or transmitted through a manifestation. And these manifestations usually happen in three principal ways, or through what we describe as a peaceful manner, or through what we describe as a wrathful manner, or through what we describe as a joyful, joyous, manner. Because there are three principal and characteristic passions. Because on the path, the individual has experience of pleasurable sensation, of void, and of clarity. So all of the manifestations of the Sambhogakaya in any of these modalities are here grouped as the devas.

Then the dakinis are particularly manifestations of energy. They may also be at the Sambhogakaya level. They can also be at other various levels. And here we have above all what are called the patrons or protectresses of the teaching. That is, beings who dominate energy.

So we have these three Guru, devas, dakinis. One concentrates on the Guru and around the Guru, all possible manifestations of the devas and dakinis. And we have here written "Namo Guru bhy". This bhy after each is a way of greeting them or paying homage to them. It's as if we were saying "To the Guru, or to the Devas, or to the dakinis, I offer greeting." What's principally important here, is that there's a witnessing of their presence. And they serve as witnesses of whatever commitments or vows we may make. So we concentrate on the presence of all three.

After this come these verses which are verses of refuge and of the refuge tree. These first four verses are words of the master Longchenpa ... [tape gap] ... The refuge tree is represented by the first three lines of this verse. And you have to notice here the particular attitude, or way of behaving, of the Dzogchen practitioner.

The first line means that in the openness of space, total openness of the sky, it's absolutely full of all of the Gurus, devas, dakinis, of the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, without limitations. There's a total presence of all of these. Because if you're taking refuge, or doing some kind of practice, it's not in the interests of, or to give pleasure to, some enlightened being. It's in the interests of the individual himself, he or she who has to realize something. So it's much much better to not limit to whom you address yourself.

Above all, if the individual has had any kind of teaching or contact, he has a connection with these teachers. You may have above all the sense, or presence, of these teachers with whom you've had connection, and these lineages with whom you've had connection, but you don't limit yourself to those necessarily.

And you take refuge not only for yourself but with a sense, an awareness, of all beings. This is the last line where it says "dag sogs etc". You refer to yourself and all

beings, the infinity of all beings. If one is a real practitioner of Dzogchen, you understand what's meant by a refuge. Real refuge doesn't mean that I ask somebody for help, and that person gives me a hand and pulls me up.

Real refuge means that I enter into knowledge of my underlying state. But in this case it's not sufficient that I enter into that knowledge only. I also have to carry on for the benefit of all beings. But for many beings to arrive on this path and to have the opportunity to be on this path, requires that there be the intervention of wisdom. And so I do this refuge as if I were guiding or leading others.

After this in the lower four verses, this is what is called the vow of Bodhicitta. But here Bodhicitta is not understood as it usually is as the taking of a vow or the making of a promise. Rather it means that in whatever one does, one has a certain kind of intention. What is the intention? Where is it directed at? One has to understand this above all to begin things. "Dag dang thayas sem can kun", etc. The meaning here is not difficult. It's actually written there.

It's what is always spoken of in the Dzogchen teaching. All beings, what is their condition from the very beginning? Knowing this, knowing what that condition is from the beginning, that is realization. So to find myself in that lived knowledge of what all beings are from the very origin, that is realization. And that's what I commit myself to going deeper and deeper into. Here the words come from a Tantra of the Anuyoga. And it was used as an expression of Bodhicitta by the master Longchenpa.

Then we have page 13. It begins with the word HUM. Here's a way of visualizing and performing the Guruyoga with an image of the master Padmasambhava. It's not said that you obligatorily have to do Guruyoga with the master Padmasambhava. You can do it in many different ways. Here we use the figure, the image, of Padmasambhava for two or three different reasons. Because Padmasambhava is an important figure in the transmission lineage of Dzogchen. And a fundamental fact about the Vajrayana as it was introduced in Tibet, is that it was brought by Padmasambhava.

And then in the Dzogchen teaching, much is said of the body of light. And there's a way of, a mode of, realization of the body of light which is called the great transfer. And Padmasambhava was one of the protagonists of this. When a master finds himself in the body of light, it's considered easier to have direct contact with him. And so for a practitioner, there's a major advantage in accomplishing this. There is a series of considerations which are motivations for using Padmasambhava in the Guruyoga.

Here the image we utilize is Padmasambhava, but that doesn't mean we're doing a Guruyoga with the individual Padmasambhava. In the Dzogchen teaching you can do the Guruyoga with various figures, for example with Padmasambhava, for example with Vajrasattva or Samantabhadra. You can do it at the Dharmakaya, at the Sambhogakaya, at the Nirmanakaya level. But however you do it, it's always understood that the image with whom you perform the Guruyoga represents the underlying state of all the masters and teachers.

Even though I'm doing a Guruyoga while practicing Dzogchen, that doesn't mean that necessarily I do it only with masters and teachers of Dzogchen. If I know how to unify all of the teachers, it means I know how to maintain all of the transmissions I've received. And this is of benefit to me. We don't have to worry that while I'm unifying all the masters, there's going to be some collision or accident among them. Because we live within those limitations. But if the masters continue to live within those limitations, then they're not realized beings. So you have to understand the principle involved.

This is why here, when we sound the HUM, and there immediately manifests the figure of Padmasambhava before us, it represents the union of all the lineages of transmission, and in particular, my masters and teachers, without any limitations about root master, less of a root master, more important master. None of that. With this consideration or this awareness, you do the invocation of Padmasambhava. This invocation of 7 verses are considered the actual words of Padmasambhava. In almost all of the traditions in Tibet these seven verses are much utilized. Even the nomads know these seven verses by heart.

You mustn't for a moment imagine that this somehow represents a Guruyoga of the Nyingmapa school. Everybody always has this idea. If a Guruyoga uses the figure of Tsongkhapa, then it's Gelugpa. If you use Milarepa, it's Kagyudpa. If it's Padmasambhava, it becomes Nyingmapa. Everybody has this idea, but right here it simply, that isn't in the picture. In the Dzogchen teaching, you on the contrary have to get rid of that kind of limitation. So that simply isn't the case here. [recitation]. This is in the Tibetan language. We utilize in almost as a mantra.

Then on page 14 we have another set of verses that we add the third time we go through it to ask for initiation. [recitation]. After this comes a mantra of Padmasambhava which links us with him, and it's a way of taking initiation. To take initiation means to develop and deepen the initiation and transmission that you've already had. And this initiation is taken through body, voice, and mind, all three of the three vajras, utilizing the letters OM AH and HUM.

You must, that is, visualize present in the three locations on Padmasambhava these three letters. Sounding them one by one, you receive white rays of light from the OM, red from the AH, blue from the HUM, and link them to the corresponding locations in yourself. [recitation]. There, OM AH HUM, of the body, of the voice, of the mind. On "jnana siddhi ah" it's non-gradual, that is, you're receiving all three rays, all three modes of initiation, simultaneously. And go on with that non-gradual total initiation on this last line "sarva siddhi phala hum ah".

When you're taking this initiation, you also always use a mudra. Whenever we do any kind of ritual or ceremonial practice, we always have in concert mantra, mudra, and visualization or concentration. The mudra always represents and presents the body. And when we say body, we mean the entire dimension of color and form. Mantra represents sound and is linked to energy. And concentration, this means the

mind. Mantra, mudra, and concentration means to put to use all three, body, voice, and mind.

And here we use the mudra of the vajra. The mudra of the vajra, Rinpoche is illustrating. Usually there are two types of vajra. There's a five-pointed vajra which is usually done that way. But that doesn't enter here at this time. Here we are doing a three-pointed vajra. And we link the two hands and do it in this way. The principle of the three-pointed vajra are the three bodies for example, the three characteristics, the three conditions, of essence, nature and energy of the underlying condition of the individual. And that's why we utilize this mudra.

But before utilizing any mudra, we utilize a movement which is called the movement of the lotus. This accompanies and slides into whatever mudra. Sometimes when one is doing something ritual, one uses mudra for presenting something. If we're going to present or display some symbol, you have to have a certain courtesy of gesture. And therefore we accompany the mudra or symbolic presentation with this movement of the lotus. It's not difficult to do this position. First with the left hand you do like that. Then with the right hand, you move outward thusly. Then you bring back the right hand so. And you move out the left hand. And you just repeat that. You can repeat it hundreds of times. Eventually it becomes more familiar and more easy. When it becomes more familiar and simple, you can use both hands a bit together. And it becomes somewhat more natural. If you do it before it becomes natural and customary for you, you end up making a kind of milling motion of the hands.

Then there's a mudra in which you make fists with the thumbs underneath the fingers, and then put one hand above the other like that. This is what's called the mudra of a promise, also to call attention to what's been promised.

Then you click your fingers, or snap your fingers. And one does that at many different moments in the course of this rite. One does it in moments of invitation. When you're asking for something that must immediately happen. In any case this sound represents that something is happening instantly, and to cut off and limit time. And these sounds are utilized in this way.

And then there are two ways of doing that with the hand. One can do it with the hand open so. And one can do it with the hand close or pointed down like that. This and this are the same thing. This and this are the same thing. This way means you're calling something. You want to obtain something. Doing it like that means either that you're asking something, or that you're offering, sending, something. This is why there's two different ways. One is more active. One is more passive. A third doesn't exist.

Here we're doing the movement of the lotus, and when we say "vajra samayaja" we do an invitation. Then we do the mudra of the vajra. When we say "kaya siddhi OM" we raise the hand in this way, and concentrate on the rays of light linking the forehead of Padmasambhava to my forehead, then from the AH from the throat of Padmasambhava come the red rays of light linking to my throat, from the HUM come the blue rays of light linking to my heart.

When we say "jnana siddhi ah", we use this mudra. This is a mudra that we utilize very much. This mudra represents totality, completeness. Therefore it's also a mudra of perfection. It also represents a mudra, therefore, of infinity. When we say "jnana siddhi ah", we perform this mudra. And this represents the totality, that the initiation is not gradual, one part at a time, but is all coming at once. And then on the "sarva siddhi phala hum ah", we finish on the AH like that. And you've already understood what that implies, to receive it all in an instant.

After this there's a mantra. This is the mantra of the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava. Here we have two kinds of mantra. [recitation]. That one on page 14. That's a mantra of Padmasambhava for long life. And here you can do Guruyoga and simultaneously a long life practice. The practice of long life is done during the part of the month when the moon is waxing, is growing.

If we're practicing not during the period of the waxing moon, like now when we're in the period of the waning moon, we utilize instead for the Guruyoga the mantra at the top of page 15. [recitation].

While reciting this mantra, you're continuing to receive the light from each of the three positions on Padmasambhava to your own OM AH HUM, your own three positions, and you're continuing to receive the light from all three positions at the same time in a total or non-gradual way. This is a continuation of the Guruyoga.

Then when you finish reciting the mantra, we have the short mantra OM AH HUM as you see printed here. When we pronounce those three words, then the manifestation, the whole concentration, of Padmasambhava, all of the Gurus, the devas, the dakinis, vanish into those three words there. And while saying that same OM AH HUM, immediately thereupon those three words disappear into those same the three corresponding locations in yourself. In this way we effect a unification of the state of the three vajras. And this is the fundamental moment, the apex, of the Guruyoga.

Then for he who wants to do it at that point, you can do what's called the reciting the vajra. That is, inhaling with a consciousness of the OM, holding the breath with a consciousness of the AH, and exhaling with a consciousness of the HUM. In this way you're reciting the mantra through breathing ... [tape gap] ... Certainly in this breathing, there isn't a precise sound. But it's not said the mantra has to operate through precise sound. There are three ways of reciting mantra. One is reciting mantra with the voice audibly. Two is reciting mantra through the breathing, either direct or indirect. Or the mantra can be recited through concentration, on the various chakras for example. So when we do this recitation of the three vajras, that is, through the breathing, we also have a concentration, an awareness, of the OM AH HUM.

Here comes a transformation. You transform yourself in the style of the Anuttaratantra system, but in particular that part of the Anuttaratantra which is called the Anuyoga. Because in general transformation is effected gradually. In the system of Anuyoga, it's not necessary always to do it

gradually. Because there's a principle shared with Dzogchen, which is the knowledge from the beginning all is self-perfected. If it's true that everything is already entirely perfected, it's sufficient not to construct something but simply to be instantaneously aware of it, to have a presence in a moment. So this is a visualization following the system and the way of transformation used by the Anuyoga.

And here there are two ways of practicing, one during waxing moon, one during waning moon. During the waxing moon we do what's on page 14. We sound the HUM. If you want to visualize the word HUM, it's the Tibetan word, the letter word, at the top of page 13 which we use for the visualization of Padmasambhava. Since we've just finished a Guruyoga in which we had the presence, the sense, of the OM AH and HUM in their respective positions, continuing with the presence, the awareness, of the blue HUM, at the center of the body, sound that HUM.

While you're sounding that HUM, in that moment you transform into Guru Drago. We in general use Guru Drago who is a wrathful form of Padmasambhava, because this is most closely linked with transmission. But if you have some other experience of transmission, if you have another heruka practice, you can transform into another heruka. You yourself transform into Guru Drago. Your whole dimension is the flaming dimension of Guru Drago.

And present at the center, at the core, of your body as Guru Drago, is the blue letter HUM. And around this blue letter HUM in this visualization as heruka, the mantra is orbiting clockwise. The mantra is going around that letter HUM in clockwise fashion. While you're reciting the mantra, the mantra is spinning around the HUM, and it resembles the ring of fire that you see if you twirl a flaming stick.

If instead, the moon is waning, and we've used the mantra at the top of page 15, then here we do a transformation not into a heruka, but into a dakini. And often we use Sihamukha. But the system of transformation and visualization is always the same. Only that, since this is a female being, the mantra orbits counterclockwise.

The mantra of Guru Drago as heruka, and of Sihamukha, are respectively the bottom of page 28 and the top of page 29. And if you don't know how to visualize them, there are representations of them on pages 28 and 29. And here's the mantra of Guru Drago. [recitation]. Here's the mantra of Sihamukha. [recitation]. You can also recite the mantra of Sihamukha backwards. Just once probably. [recitation]. To recite the mantra backwards means to put it into action. But when you practice normally, you don't put it into action.

Immediately after each of these two, we do the dogpa (ldog-pa). It's a verse that drives away all negativity. During the period of the waxing moon, [recitation]. Instead when we're doing the dakini practice, [recitation].

We're on page 15. After this comes the practice of the guardians. When you're doing the practice of the guardians, when you're having contact with the guardians, the most important single consideration is that you have to remain in the transformed form. If you're not, if you don't have this awareness of being either the heruka or the dakini, this will

work much less.

First there is an invitation to the Gurus, devas, dakinis. [recitation]. On "vajra sparanyakham" we're making infinite offerings, and we use the mudra of infinity. And finish [finger snap] like that making offering.

Now then there is a offering to the Gurus, devas, dakinis. And there's a mantra. [recitation]. On the series of words "Rupa shapta gandhe" etc., these represent the five senses. There is a mudra for each. This is the mudra for rupa, the mudra of totality. Shapta is sound, and it has to do with sounding. Gandhe refers to smell, and therefore perfume. It originally represented a seashell which was must used in Kriyatantra to hold incense. Rasa is taste and is an offering of food. And sparshe is an offering of tactile, of the sense of touch, and it's as if you're holding a piece of cloth. Dharmadhatu is totality.

And on "maha panca amrita" there's this mudra, and the referral is to nectar. "Rakta", you turn like that. "Balingta", you switch the fingers in that way. And then on "Kharam" you snap the fingers. You're offering. You're sending. "Khahi" you snap the fingers in the opposite direction, receiving. Because after the offering, you're asking them to deliver.

Then afterward we have Ekajati. [recitation].

Then a mantra of all the Mahakalas. [recitation].

Then there's the guardian, Rahula. [recitation].

Then there's Dorje Legpa. [recitation].

After this comes another mantra which we utilize in America, because America is the territory of the guardians called the tsen. Here it's not printed. [recitation]. After that, top of page 17, is the mantra of the eight classes. That covers all of the guardians. [recitation]. After that a mantra for contact with the local guardians. [recitation].

Here there's a verse which is like an offering to the guardians, and also a request of their action. [recitation]. The original words are of the master Jigmay Lingpa. Then after this comes a longer invocation of Dorje Legpa. Dorje Legpa is a more recent let us say, guardian of Dzogchen. He had contact with Padmasambhava, and he had also been a guardian of the Dzogchen teachings in the Bonpo tradition. In the Bonpo tradition, he'd been called not Dorje Legpa but Ase. When Padmasambhava had contact with Dorje Legpa, what we have here is the text of their actual dialogue, and we use it almost as a mantra. [recitation].

We utilize this invocation of Dorje Legpa, for example, when we're on retreat. And we utilize it to have advantages and benefits a bit for practitioners at all times. To have to say all of those words may seem a bit boring, but what's interesting is having it work. And it works like a mantra.

We're on page 22, and the four verses at the bottom of page 22 explain how our behavior should be, above all, in the practice of transformation as in the Anuyoga. In the teachings of the Anuyoga, there's a way in which behavior should be. These are the words of a master who is called Minling Terchen Gyurmay Dorje (smin-gling gter-chen 'gyur-med rdo-rje). [recitation].

After that comes an invocation. [recitation]. Then

there's a mantra to authenticate the dedication of merit. To authenticate, or validate, the dedication of merit means to make it actually work. [recitation].

Everything up to this point has been practice of the path of transformation. And the method of transformation is not particularly Dzogchen. But in the Dzogchen teachings, there are no limitations. Nothing is refused. Rather a practitioner has to be conscious of all different methods, and of how we use them, and when and where to use them. Now we've finished.

[Sunday morning, 18-Jul-82]

Before doing practice, I'd like to give some explanation. And someone asked me to give a little more general explanation, so I think I'll do that a bit now. General explanation means when someone says Dzogchen teaching, just what is the difference between that and Zen. What is the difference between that and Tantra? What is the relationship to Sutra and so forth. And this is something which tends to be asked very often. In one sense this is a matter of intellectual study, and it does not have much to do with practice. But in order to have one's ideas clear, it may be necessary, I think, to give a little explanation.

There are three human aspects. We'll try to give a rather concrete exposition of this. This is an existence as body, voice, and mind. Body is something material, and it's linked to all material things. and then by voice we mean the energy which this material body and these material things possess. And the mind is the nature of these two. We're not talking about three things which are complete separate or different. They're expressions of the same principle.

And so in general the teachings correspond. And there are specific teachings which correspond to each of these three levels. That which is most widely known is what's called the way, or the path, of renunciation. Thereafter comes the path of transformation, and then the path of self-liberation. These three exist.

Fundamentally, all teachings are based on one or another, or all three, of these three aspects of human beings. Certainly it doesn't mean that one teaching speaks only of one aspect of these three. But rather that that is a matter of what is given emphasis, what is primarily worked with, in a given teaching. Through these different levels, one can work on all aspects of the base, the path, and the fruit.

When we speak of the three bodies, the three kayas, the body we speak of, the Nirmanakaya, is a material body. This means a body visible to the individual, and here this dimension is presented in Buddhism as Buddha Shakyamuni, the historical Buddha. Buddha Shakyamuni is considered an actual Indian who was born in India, who lived in India, who was illuminated and taught there. It's true that there are differences in the way of seeing this phenomenon in the Hinayana and Mahayana vehicles.

The Hinayana point of view is that the Buddha was born a human being and, through following the path, arrived at realization. Certainly it doesn't mean that he began with nothing at all and that the whole process began in this life.

That's not the principle. It's always considered that behind this life there were thousands of lives of bettering oneself, of making great effort, and great sacrifices. But in the Mahayana point of view, the historical Buddha Shakyamuni is considered a manifestation of the Nirmanakaya dimension, who was born as if a human being to communicate with human beings. But in any case it's not important to the principle of this consideration.

It remains the case that the Buddha was present as a human being, capable of direct contact with other human beings. It means that the Buddha taught in human language, and that he spoke through the material body, that other human beings heard him with human ears. This is what is meant by Nirmanakaya, that there's physical contact.

This teaching in this way, what did it produce? It functioned primarily through human believing. Since human beings believe that there are material things, it works through material things. Since for the human being, this karmic vision is the case and is something concrete, so this teaching works at that level. The Buddha proceeded to explain that this karmic vision is an illusion, that it isn't real, because he knew that human beings believe in the concrete existence of this vision and through that create attachment. And he was dealing with those beliefs.

And what's the best way of communicating at this level then? To deny this belief in materiality and material things, and to bring one to the realization of shunyata, of the void, also through intellectual methods. Because one can be brought from materiality to grasping the void or emptiness underlying it through intellectual techniques, through reasoning.

So in the Prajna Paramita, there's an explanation which begins with the aggregates of which we're composed, and takes us all the way to Nirvana, and the method here, for example, is to explain that form does not exist, that the senses do not exist. So that one by one he proceeds to negate each of the considerations and in this way helps man to understand. In this way arrives at that famous consideration of shunyata, the void or emptiness.

But it doesn't mean that when you've bared everything to its emptiness, what is there is nothing. Even if we proceed intellectually to understand the voidness of all things, since we're human beings, karmic vision still is the case for us. And it's at this point what arises is the explanation of what is called the relative truth and the absolute truth, and this is the explanation offered in all the different types of Sutra.

Where does it arise? At the end, it goes as far as the human intelligence can get and when it can't get beyond that, it defines what's there as shunyata. That is, it defines it as beyond intelligence, what is called Prajna Paramita. This is, let us say, the destination, or the goal, of the intellectual work of all the Sutras.

When we come to ways of interpreting or proceeding on that path, there are many, many different schools or traditions. But there are above all two major currents: one considered to be non-gradual and the other considered as gradual. By gradual or graduated, what do we mean? By gradual

it is meant that even if I speak a great deal and understand a great deal about shunyata, if I haven't accumulated the necessary actions to bring me along the path, I can't get to real knowledge of this famous shunyata, because shunyata is beyond conception. It's Prajna Paramita, beyond intelligence. It's not something objective. It doesn't enter within the limits and measures of our mind. It isn't discoverable through words. It's not communicable.

In this case the only means is to develop clarity. But to develop clarity requires in the Sutras two different accumulations. One is called the accumulation of merit and then the accumulation of wisdom. So when we speak of five paths in the Sutras, first comes what they call tsoglam (tshogs-lam), the path of accumulation. When one has completed the accumulation of the necessary prerequisites, then and only then does one find oneself on the path of application. And on this way of application, finally one finds oneself at the knowledge of shunyata, and thus one arrives, finally, at knowledge of what is spoken of as the absolute truth.

From this point of view, if one were to proceed immediately on the path of application, that is, on the path of the absolute, it would be considered that it couldn't be real, that it would have to be unreal. And this is why there exists the famous gradual path. Almost all of the Buddhist Sutras, almost all of Sutric Buddhism, follows that path. Above all, in Tibet there was a debate about this because there had first been there the tradition of Chinese Sutric Buddhism and other kinds arriving from India provoked a debate and polemic with the Chinese tendency. Thus, official Sutric Buddhism in Tibet didn't look upon Chinese Buddhist tendencies with a positive eye. And this means that what was official was a very gradual kind of path.

Instead what is called the Chinese tradition is considered a non-gradual Sutric path. To say a non-gradual path means that it's considered possible from the very start to apply both truths, relative and absolute. That is, a person who finds himself in normal life, that is, in the relative situation, obviously must proceed with the consciousness of the relative situation. But here it's not said that he must wait until he arrives at the third level.

It's considered rather that one can already begin applying what is called the absolute truth. Applying the absolute truth is possible through, for example, practices such shinay (zhi-gnas). And in this way, one proceeds balancing one's situation as it is, harmonizing the existence of the two truths. And this in principle is what is called a non-gradual path. But here too the teaching is still based on the Buddhist Sutras.

We can notice that in Chinese Buddhism and its variants, even on the non-gradual path, that the emphasis is given, great importance is given, to being a monk. And the community of Buddhists is always guided by monks because this reflects an awareness of the relative social situation. But if one finds oneself genuinely in the condition beyond the relative situation, then one would give no importance to a matter of morality. So here too there's a conception of the two truths

in equipoise.

Why was this? Because every nation, every individual, every people depends very much on its own culture. China and its habit, its philosophy and culture, we know that the Chinese culture has as its basic concept the yin and yang, and so they imported Buddhism a bit on this basis. So in Tibet the Buddhist eventually arrived at Tantrism. And Tantrism had ultimately much greater success in Tibet than Sutric Buddhism because there pre-existed the culture of Bon, and because the Bon culture was based above all on the functioning of energies.

So since each country has its own culture, its way of importing and its way of understanding, let's say, Buddhism in particular. So Chinese Buddhism and its Japanese offspring Zen, have a particular way of integrating Buddhism with their cultural way of seeing. But the basic principle there, since it's Sutric Buddhism, is always the path of renunciation. Because when you live a normal human life limited to the relative condition, the situation always calls for renunciation.

Then comes what is called Tantrism. In Tantrism we have what is called the inferior and the superior, the higher and the lower Tantra, or one also refers to external Tantra and internal Tantra. But this is a division based a bit on ways of doing practice. But the common principle of all Tantrism is the path not of renunciation, but of transformation. In principle, it's not a teaching based so much on the material level of material things and bodies. So it's not characteristic of, it doesn't correspond to, the level of teachings which has to do with material body.

But rather this is the level of teaching which has to do with energy. Therefore, it's not a teaching which was communicated historically by a mouth and heard by ears, because that has to do with material limits. And Tantrism is not a teaching which primarily emphasizes the material aspects. Energy can be felt in many ways. Energy can be experienced through vibration, through the visual experiences of form, through experiences of color and the like.

When we think of the transmission of Tantrism, we do not say that the transmission arose from, or came from, the Nirmanakaya. We've said that the Nirmanakaya involves a body like the historical Buddha Shakyamuni. Even if he's to be understood as a being who chose to manifest at this physical, material level, still he manifested as a material body, as a human being. You have to understand that when we speak of a Nirmanakaya kind of manifestation, we're talking about something physical, tangible, visibly present.

But the Sambhogakaya and its manifestations doesn't mean that. It means a manifestation through light, that is, through the essence of the elements. Thus for many common, ordinary mortals, it's not visible. When matter, something material, enters into its very substance which is light, it's not any longer an ordinary matter or something ordinarily visible. And that we think of as a manifestation of the Sambhogakaya.

And those who can have communication with such a being are only those who've developed a higher capacity. The

Tantric teachings come through this kind of source, and these manifestations also give rise to what we call the mandala. When these manifestations have appeared, if one has even an instant's contact with them and that can somehow be made into a photograph, it would show the whole dimension which we call mandala.

But to speak of a manifestation or an appearance of the dimension of the Sambhogakaya doesn't mean that sometimes the Sambhogakaya shows itself, sometimes it disappears. That's not how we understand it. A manifestation of the Sambhogakaya is beyond time and temporal measure. But we live in time, and since we live in time our appreciation of, and contact with, and receptivity towards, the communication has a beginning and an end, has a temporal character. And how it was for that time is what we call mandala.

Tantrism is not considered something that was taught by someone by mouth, but rather Tantrism is teachings whose transmissions took place directly through appearance of color and form by appearance. We have many, many texts of what we call Tantras. These are descriptions of the teaching of someone who has had that experience of manifestation. It's not words which someone told him, but the teaching which was implicit in this manifestation.

It's certain that we're not saying that the manifestations which give rise to Tantrism are only visual. There's also sound. But the sound, this dimension of sound, is what we call the natural sound of the vajra, and one of the most important examples is the song of the vajra, Emakiri kiri, which we sing. Nor does this mean that the natural sound of the vajra doesn't actually have meaning. It can also certainly have a communicable meaning but at no point was it words that were said by some mouth. And for this reason we say also that the sources of Tantrism can't be in any way limited.

Sometimes we speak for example, of the history of the Kalachakra. It is said that the Kalachakra was manifested by the historical Buddha, Buddha Shakyamuni, before his Parinirvana. This means that Buddha Shakyamuni manifested in this way, and in that fashion communicated to someone. But that doesn't mean that the Kalachakra was born there.

If we go into the dimension of Tantrism and study it, we discover that there are thousands of different histories. It's sufficient just to look at one of the Tantric images. Today people talk about Tantric art and now the mandala is considered art and why not? It's perfectly reasonable, since there's much to study visibly in the mandala. But in principle it's not art which someone created. It's a description, and it's also an attempt to describe the figure, the image, into which one must transform. There are figures such as the dakini Sihamukha with the lion's head. And there are figures like the heruka Yamantaka, a very important figure with the head of a bull or a cow. There are many herukas who have many, many arms like a scorpion.

When we attempt intellectually to explain this, we can find or cook up any number of explanations for that. If it has four legs, we ask ourselves "Now why does he have four legs?" And when we read a little bit about it, we come up with

"Well there are four noble truths". And if we study six legs, we better find two more so we say "That represents the six lokas". You can always find something to justify the reasoning, but all of that comes afterwards. It is postfacto reasoning, interpretations, etc. The truth is it has nothing to do with anything.

In the manifestation which gave rise to Tantrism, figures appeared that way for a very precise reason. Because many of these teachings come to us from other dimensions of beings. And realized beings imported these teachings to this planet and amongst human beings. We say that the manifestation of Yamantaka has the head of a bull. You can be quite sure that a bull just doesn't have anything to do with that. But it resembles something that we can perceive as a bull. We can use that as a way of understanding what it looks like. So we believe that's a bull's head. Because we don't have any idea on some other planet in some other solar system what kinds of beings and how many kinds of beings may exist.

When a Sambhogakaya manifestation occurs, its appearance is appropriate to those who receive it. If I'm a human being and I have only one head, only two arms and two legs, then a Sambhogakaya manifestation may well appear to me as a human being. But if I'm some other kind of being, then that manifestation might well come as some other kind of being. When we transform ourselves into or observe these kinds of figures, for us it always seems something peculiar. So when these methods were imported to our dimension, we considered them a form of art. But in fact, from that dimension as it manifested, we borrow the description which we call mandala.

So in this way was born the teaching which we call Tantra, and its method involves the application of energy. Transformation implies that one has a superior capacity to that of a normal person. A superior capacity means that one is capable of understanding this meaning so that, for example, one doesn't have to first of all spend time negating or denying those things, but one already possesses the knowledge of void, that things are not real. This means that the conception that was arrived at, but the effort to realize shunyata is something one already knows, already has, because if you don't know that what is here is void, if you don't have this concept clearly in hand, then you can't transform at all.

So, that Tantrism works through energy means that one already possesses the knowledge relevant to the material body and its way of working, that instead of this unreal or illusionary vision, one substitutes another vision. For example we transform our impure vision into pure vision. When it really is the case for you, and this transformed vision has become real for you, then you realized reintegration with the true substance of things.

That is, when we spoke of the water which had become dense and become ice and know you can deal with that ice in an entirely different way, for example, transforming it into ice cream. That is, you're not conditioned by the ice, and if you smash against it, the ice doesn't break your head. That is to say, the individual has become the master of this ice. It's not that this ice is in a position to govern or dominate the human being.

And in this way the path of transformation becomes very important. Certainly to transform karmic vision is very different from renouncing it. Renunciation implies that the negative is always negative. But transformation implies that there is a value in that object which can emerge when its form is changed. So on this path, nothing is renounced and everything is transformed.

For example, when we say the path of renunciation, if one gets angry, wrath or anger is always a cause, a potential, of hell birth, of hell vision. One knows that one mustn't get angry, so one seeks to find some way of not getting angry or overcoming one's anger. If I'm somewhere where everything and everyone irritates me, the best thing to do is get out of there fast and go somewhere where no one will anger me.

But since I always have my passions, who knows if I'm not going to find someone to get me mad in that new place too. There may be no human beings there, but there may be blood-thirsty mosquitoes. There's always going to be something which irritates and angers me until I overcome and transcend myself. But on that path I keep trying to get away from it all and to renounce the negative. Those are the characteristics of the path of renunciation.

It's enough to look at the path of renunciation to understand it, to see that as soon as someone becomes spiritual on that path, he becomes a monk. He becomes a monk because the worldly condition is understood as a nest of vipers. If there's so many snakes there that are likely to bite me, it's best to flee from that.

This is not what we call transforming. But rather in Tantrism, we know that these very conditions which in the other case are fled, are themselves opportunities for development. If I feel angry, there's something to feel. And feeling is something linked to energy. Instead of renouncing or suppressing that, this feeling is something that I can use as energy, is something that I can use for my practice.

Certainly it's not used with distraction or just by leaving it as a passion in a normal way. If somebody angers me and I go and argue with that person. He gives me a punch and I punch him back, that's not what we call transformation. That's what's called putting rage into action. But in transformation I have the feeling, the sensation, of rage and I transform that.

On the path of transformation, there are deities into whom one can transform and there are peaceful or joyous or ferocious or wrathful ones. And these correspond to three fundamental passions: ignorance in the case of the peaceful deities, sensuality and attachment in the case of the joyous ones, and wrath or anger in the case of the angry ones. If I'm very angry, I can take that feeling, that sense, and easily transform it by becoming a wrathful heruka.

Because transformation into a wrathful heruka, or transformation into a heruka of any kind, is a way of using my feeling and the feeling energy as a kind of fuel, for the transformation, for the practice. This doesn't mean that so and so got me angry, and I respond with anger and I charge it up even further by becoming a heruka, and now I really let him have it. That's not what's meant.

To become the heruka means above all, our awareness, our present sense of this feeling. The heruka involves a dimension of that feeling which is universal. It's that wrathfulness which becomes total and no longer directed to that person. Now identified with this, we're not working on some kind of detail which might happen to be that person which angered us, nor do we need to physically deal with some minor detail like that person. But above all, we have presence, immediate awareness of this passion, and this case we're talking about rage, and identification with it in its totality.

In this case, we've not abandoned anything nor renounced anything nor escaped anything, but rather entered much more into this feeling, this sensation of the passions. And this presence, this immediate awareness, can be applied in, and made use of, at all times. And this is a way truly of working with one's energy. And this can be understood for all passions, and we can understand all of the passions and understand how they've arrived from our sensory contact. And this is how practice is done through transformation, and this is characteristic of Tantra which is very, very different, as you see, from Sutra. This is the fundamental method of Tantrism, whatever variants we may be speaking of.

Beyond that comes the path of self-liberation, and this is above all the method of the Dzogchen teachings. In Dzogchen there's also some use of transformation and this has to be understood. In the school and tradition called Nyingmapa, when an analysis is made of Tantrism, it's seen as having three levels: Mahayoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga. Mahayoga, the great yoga, is understood as embracing all that which is normally known as Anuttaratantra, the superior Tantras or interior Tantras. The method there is transformation. It's applied by the individual to his dimension as in the consideration we were giving of mandala and so forth. And all these, the transformation of the individual, the apparition of the mandala, is developed gradually, is gradually constructed.

When we come to what's called Anuyoga, the method is different. There, there's the understanding that the individual is from the very beginning self-perfected. Since everything is already there, the path need not deploy a method of transformation that's very gradual and slowly adds to what is. Since it's already there, it's simply important to transform it. And this transformation can be immediately present.

And then through this work with transformation, one finally arrives at a state which is called Dzogchen. So there in Anuyoga, the term Dzogchen is applied to a final state which can be eventually obtained, the arrival point of the path of transformation. Instead, in the system of the Anuttaratantras, what we spoke of as the Mahayoga, in the Nyingmapa school, they speak of Anuttaratantra, the final point, the arrival state, is what is called Mahamudra.

On the path of self-liberation, we don't use the method of transformation. The principle here is, instead, the path of self-liberation. From the beginning, one experiences a direct introduction as you recall is stated in the last three

sayings of Garab Dorje. The introduction, right from the start, is a direct introduction of the self-perfectedness of the individual.

You mustn't confuse the non-gradual tradition of Zen with the non-gradual teachings of Dzogchen. The non-gradual or direct path is words, that's a label, that can be applied to anything. But the actual principle is very different. To say that it's different is not to say that one's better or one's worse. All teaching, all methods, given to man are good, but you have to understand the principles which distinguish them.

When we speak of non-graduality in Zen, it's to find oneself in, or to discover, or to understand, to apply, what's called the absolute truth. And what is the absolute truth there? Shunyata, emptiness or void, what is spoken of in the Sutras, where systematically everything is negated, so that in the end nothing is left except shunyata, voidness.

But in the Dzogchen teaching, shunyata is only a part of the qualities or characteristics of the individual. When in Dzogchen there's a direct introduction, we speak of the base or the underlying condition of the individual and we analyze three aspects: the essence, the nature, and the energy.

The essence, this one aspect, is void. That's the condition we call shunyata, but thereafter there's what we call clarity, and above all there's its energy or way of functioning. And then through an understanding of how energy functions as tsal, as dang, as rolpa, then we understand how everything can be self-perfected, including all the relative dimension.

That famous distinction in the Sutras between the relative truth and the absolute truth, this concept doesn't particularly occur in the Dzogchen teachings, because everything is self-perfected and all things are qualities of or characteristics of, the ultimate state of the individual. If we have to go and distinguish or separate or judge all these things, then we will find ourselves in a relative situation. If we have to explain relatively, we can explain a bit as if we're talking of the reflections in the mirror.

And at this point we say in the Dzogchen teaching that all our vision, all that presents itself, is an embellishment, an ornament, of our underlying state. This is the teaching of the base. And the knowledge of the base which we arrive at through direct introduction is knowledge of the self-perfectedness of the condition of the individual.

Then on the path we work with how you apply the working of energy, the functioning of energy, above all, working with sound and vision. Here many methods arise from working with the energy, such as in the Upadesha series of the Dzogchen teachings, the trecho and the thogay. And many of these are linked with many series of practices such as those used in Tantra, because the Dzogchen teaching is a teaching which works primarily with that aspect of our existence which we call mind, neither with the energy nor with the material body. But material body and energy are part of, or dependent upon, mind always.

So one makes application of these methods without limiting oneself. So one can make use of any and all methods

and in the Dzogchen Upadesha teachings, we have almost all of the methods used in Tantrism. But the principal and fundamental means always spoken of is contemplation. All of the other means are devices for developing contemplation.

There's no type of practice which is not directly linked to our existence. So also when we speak of realization, the realization is the manifestation of the condition of the individual which is no longer implicit and underlying, but as it really is. But this manifestation is through the reintegration of our energy which had been experienced as subject and object. This is characteristic of Dzogchen, characteristic of the path of self-liberation.

But what does self-liberation mean? It means first of all it's not a method for renouncing something. Because there's nothing to renounce since everything is already self-perfected. Nor is there anything to transform, because to transform means also to work with the mind, and it means to transform something into something else. And this is still very far from contemplation. So self-liberation means to find oneself in one's own state, in the state of that which is perfect.

Let's say I'm angry. It's not necessary for me to transform into a divinity, a heruka. Rather if I'm someone who has the experience of contemplation, then the very sensation of rage, the very experiencing of this anger, can be contemplative. If I find myself in this state of perceiving, of observing, that's self-liberation. Whatever may arise, contact through our senses, experiencing of passions, whatever it may be, if one isn't distracted and one finds oneself in pure presence, in immediate awareness, there's always the possibility of self-liberating. Not everyone has equal capacity for this. There's many ways of developing one's capacity. But where we're aiming and what we're learning in Dzogchen right from the start is this.

As the great master Yontan Dorjepa (Yon-tan rdo-rje-pa ??) said: When some scholars went to visit him, one of the scholars said "You Dzogchen practitioners, you're constantly meditating?" Yontan Dorjepa responded to the question with a question: "What's there to meditate?" Because meditation was understood at that time to mean working with the mind. Therefore "What's to meditate?" "So", said the scholar, "you don't meditate?" Once again Yontan Dorjepa answered the question with a question "When am I ever distracted?" he asked.

And this discourse is a principle of the Dzogchen teaching. What you learn from the very beginning of Dzogchen teaching is aimed at this. It's easy to understand the words, but as a matter of practical fact, it's not so easy to understand. So there's always a lot to do.

That's the explanation for now. And we can do now together the practice of the purification of the six lokas just as we did yesterday.

[Sunday afternoon, 18-Jul-82]

Once again we're going to be explaining some of the practices of the khorde rushan. Yesterday we explained the practice done with the body, particularly the position of the vajra. But one can also do many practices of the body as through yantra yoga. People who don't know yantra yoga may think of it as not being very important. But it is very important, because we always have a material body.

And if you don't have control of the body, you don't have control of energy. If you don't have control of energy, then to talk of control of the mind is just talk. Many people say "I'm interested in meditation, things that haven't to do with the physical yoga, but are more spiritual."

But certainly as regards to meditation, you first of all have to understand the meaning. Then when you've understood, you have to apply it. An application of meditation is always related to our body and our energy. So if you ignore material body and its energy, one's knowledge remains only an idea. If one knows anything but doesn't apply them, then that just becomes a stamp collection of teachings.

It is true that there are many, many people who spend their whole lives just collecting teachings, and will say "Ah, this is very interesting!" Then they hear of another master and they say "Oh that's very interesting. He teaches asanas", and there's some title or name to it. And they keep finding things interesting. They find it so interesting that when they understand something, they write it in their notebooks. And thus they spend months and months. Whenever there's an opportunity which arises, they continue this collecting of teachings.

Then one day they become very old, if they last that long. But there's no guarantee that everyone's going to make it. Then one day sooner or later arrives the end of life. If they are very nice and courteous people, they leave their collection of teachings to their children, but there's nothing to say that the children will even be interested. Some children might say "Well it's a kind of souvenir of my dead parents."

It's true. It really happens this way. It's very important then, that knowledge be applied. And this too mustn't be confused. You must not confuse application with merely intellectual knowledge. For example, a person learns a little about the practices of Dzogchen. It would seem that he understood quite well. Moreover it seems to him that this is something which you can very easily apply to life. But his life instead is passed in distraction.

So it's very easy to confuse practice with your distraction. And of this it was master Padmasambhava who said that in the Dzogchen Semde teachings, it is very easy to confuse your practical life with that way of seeing. So in that case, one must observe closely and apply to one's practical life, one's daily life, a gradual teaching. That is to say, one confounds oneself, or confuses oneself, with ideas and this very often happens to all of us. And this is really too bad.

And the antidote is to observe oneself closely, above all, people who have many times followed teachings of

Dzogchen. They have to stop and see whether this knowledge that they have acquired actually corresponds to the way in which they are living. If when you stop and observe yourself, that you are conditioned by things, that means that the teaching is still merely a theory for you. And it's very easy to wake up and notice that.

First of all we speak of our passions. For example, you grow angry. Stop and see if in the moment of growing angry, you actually have the capacity to liberate yourself or not. If you have that, it means that your practice is working. If it doesn't happen at that moment, it means that your practice is still far from application. But I'm just giving the example of rage.

There are many other types of passions, for example, attachment. For example, two people who love each other, there would easily be jealousy present. Or two people who are in love, what does "in love" mean in truth? It means that these individuals are governed, are conditioned, by passion. There also exists a way of experiencing and living love governing the passion with wisdom. In that case, the individual is not governed by passion. All of us live in a human situation full of passions and we can all observe very well how we live those passions.

One item that could easily be a very small thing or a very big thing, take the example of smoking. Many, many people smoke. There are types of teachings or versions of teachings which say that you must not smoke. But in Dzogchen teachings there's no obligation or rule about anything. If someone is following the Dzogchen teaching and he smokes a thousand cigarettes in one day, the teachings have nothing to say about it.

But one does well to observe oneself. What the teaching urges one to do is to help oneself, to collaborate and cooperate with oneself. If one smokes a great deal, does that do you good or do you harm? We all know perfectly well that it does you harm. It doesn't do good. Also medically speaking, it does harm and also in the teachings, it explains that much smoking diminishes one's clarity ... [tape gap] ... after awhile, clarity surely diminishes. After awhile there's less memory.

That means that that kind of habit doesn't favour the individual, is not to the individual's benefit. We perform practice to develop our clarity. So here we have somebody who is theoretically learning a method for developing clarity, and as a matter of practical fact does everything to diminish his clarity. There's no correspondence there, no match.

If one discovers and understands this principle, then there arises a desire to help oneself a little. And this we call being knowledgeable or conscious. That is to say, we can be knowledgeable and conscious not only of smoking, but of all of our passions and conflicts. And one has to see. And one succeeds or doesn't succeed in overcoming the practice.

If someone says to me "Why do you smoke?" People reply "Well I smoke because it pleases me." And other people have some kind of philosophy. They think about it in some way because human beings always live with this attitude of justifying themselves. If somebody wants to defend his

smoking, he carries on about our society which is full of toxins and poisons, so it's better if I smoke a little and live more nearly in that condition. But who is to say whether any of that makes any sense or not? On all these points, knowing better and then trying to defend yourself, what you're doing is simply duping or hoodwinking yourself.

But if you know whether something in fact does you good or does you harm, then there arises a principle of wanting to help yourself. If you don't know what's involved or don't succeed in overcoming your impulse, for example, someone who smokes heavily or is into other substances or drinks heavily, and gets drunk all of the time, then we say that he's suffering from a vice or a habit. A vice or a habit is a desire which is constant. And this means above all that the individual is not master of him or herself.

What the teaching says above all else is that one becomes master of oneself and is not conditioned or governed by any other factor. But if you don't succeed, you have to discover why you don't succeed. You have to search for the cause. Behind a vice or habit, there is some kind of habituation in the organism as such. And this is why we perform, for example, purification with medicine at the physical level. Certainly the medicine is not going to produce a miracle by itself, because first of all the individual has to decide to collaborate or cooperate with himself. And this regards many considerations, all considerations, not just smoking. And one has to be knowledgeable about this.

Let's take a man and a woman who are, say, in love. It is important that they understand this principle. Not that the man should be conditioned by the woman and the woman conditioned by the man. Because that's a false position. Even if they manifest at this moment as so much in love, it really isn't true. Afterwards, the slightest abating of this passion, the hate will start to show. So one has to live knowledgeable about what one is. To love means to collaborate and to cooperate, and requires that each individual actually know what his real condition and situation really is.

Two young people who care for each other have to know that one day they're going to be two old people and will have to care for each other. If they don't know that, every kind of problem arises. This is not only true with regards to love, with regards to anything and everything, all four passions, whatever passion it may be. It's not being said that it must be applied and lived. Passion is always a part of a person and also what we call an ornament, an embellishment, of the person. But when the individual is dominated by the passion, then he's finished.

So what we learn from the teaching is always to be autonomous. And autonomy doesn't imply something egotistical. Because if I know in principle what an individual is, what my condition is, then there arises also the principle of helping the other, now that I understand him. In the Dzogchen teachings, we don't understand the teachings to merely involve something "spiritual", the individual set apart, eyes shut in position, and the like.

The teaching has to do with the individual finding himself in his dimension in the world in which he lives. And

our dimension is eating, drinking, walking, sleeping, working, our life. We have nothing that is not related directly to our condition, our situation. And so to learn this is to learn how to bring our knowledge, our consciousness, to integrate our consciousness, into our daily life.

So for these reasons it's very important to learn, for example, how to coordinate movements, breathing, energy, and the like. A practice like yantra yoga involves all kinds of movements and positions, the objective of which is a mastery over our energies. When one has mastered the functioning of one's energy, then and only then there exists self-control of the mind. Otherwise there's no match.

In my area, in eastern Tibet, there's a monastery called Dzogchen monastery. And there's a college there, and my college teacher, when he was young, was in that college. And he told me a little anecdote. When they were in college, they studied very much a text called Bodhicharyavatara, a text by Shantideva, which is very famous, very famous because it's about a way of applying Bodhicitta.

So they studied it to the point of learning it by heart. And for example, first of all in the text there's the method of training oneself to view all beings impartially. And then there's a technique of putting yourself in the other's place. When I find someone else in a wretched condition, I learn how mentally to put myself in his condition. And then there's taught what is called dawachenche ??, that is, to learn to give the other more importance than I give to myself.

And they not only studied this but trained themselves mentally in this regard. And this is linked to training in what is called the six prajna paramitas, the path when applied leads to Bodhisattva. For example, there's generosity, also the capacity to bear with all trials, all difficulties. And each of these is not only an exposition, but they are methods of training oneself in this regard.

And during one period they were training themselves very thoroughly in regard to the theme of bearing with, or supporting, difficulties. It was summer and it was raining a lot. And in that particular area where this monastery is, all the houses are roofed with beaten earth. If the earth is not well beaten, gaps have been left. And when it rains, the rain enters the house.

And one day all of the students went up on the roof to beat the earth of the roofs. And there were a number of students who were teasing an older student who was a monk. And this old monk at a certain point got nervous. While he was beating the roof, he had this wooden instrument, a kind of paddle for beating on it, in his hand. And he took this up and he came charging towards these younger students.

And at this point he recited a phrase of Shantideva from this book. He said in this phrase that he quoted: "For a kalpa, for a thousand kalpas, I've been accumulating good actions. And you can destroy all of that acquisition of merit with one moment of rage." Saying that he started to beat them.

He hadn't forgotten the consequence. He had this lesson fully present. He knew perfectly well that he shouldn't be getting angry, but he was furious and he really beat them. This is what's meant by knowledge not working in practice, and

this can happen very, very often.

To avoid this, to have real self-control, requires that one works right from the start with the body and with one's energy. Very often we have a really lovely idea of self-liberation. But when the time comes, when it's the crunch, we don't act. At times we're not permitted to achieve self-liberation by our energy. For example, a person doesn't want to be nervous.

Or for example you know you're going to be dealing with someone who you find unsympathetic, towards whom you're hostile. And the thing you do is, you say to yourself "Today when I meet him, I don't want to show any hostility. I want to be diplomatic. I want to be very courteous." And you greet him, and as usual he greets you a bit rigidly. You're beginning already to work up some steam. You've exchanged two words and out comes the first insult.

Why does this happen? Because you're not permitted to do as you'd like to do by the way your energy functions. So it's very important to understand what is the cause of this behaviour. And in this regard yantra yoga is very important. We can always do the practice of yantra as a practice having to do with that aspect of existence which we call the body. In yantra we can coordinate and balance our prana, our vital energy. And we can also find ourselves through yantra in the state of khorde rushan. So this is one way of doing it.

And then we also have the practice of the voice. The practice of the voice is something which there are many ways to do. But all of the traditions of the Upadesha series of Dzogchen teachings given by many masters are more or less all of them based upon the Tantra of the Upadesha which is called Drathaljur. And there what's explained are four fundamental aspects of the practice of voice. At times masters give one simple practice, one simple practice which substitutes for all four of the others. First of all I'm going to explain how you do all four of the practices described in the Tantra of the Upadesha.

The first of these is called gyaydab (rgyas-gdab). Gyaydab means governed by something, or authenticated by it. The principle is that you begin with a visualization. You visualize the letter HUM at the center of the body. The letter HUM is the one you find in the red book next to the picture of Padmasambhava. But you don't concentrate on the letter HUM as if it were approaching you from the outside. But rather you are presenting the HUM, so it manifests as if looking out from you. Because the HUM represents our innate consciousness. It's not something which is coming to me from outside.

At the center of the body you concentrate on a blue HUM. It's not important whether the HUM you concentrate on is big, little, or middle sized. It's the size which comes to your mind. So for the duration of several breaths, you visualize the HUM. And then you begin to sound the HUM. And the HUM is sounded with the mouth and through the nostrils at the same time. The sound is slow, and you reinforce it, first it's low and then you reinforce it, and make it louder and slow it down again. The way you sound the HUM and the rhythm that you breathe out are authentically one and the same.

It sometimes is compared, this exhalation and sounding, has the form of a grain of barley. It means that it begins very subtle and slight and then widens out and becomes large, and then it narrows out again. You sound it visualizing the HUM clearly. You do that two or three times. When the visualized HUM is clear, you concentrate that while sounding the HUM, from the central HUM emerges many, many secondary HUMs. These HUMs emerge and go outside of you, and they fill the entire outside vision. Then when you breathe in, when you inhale, all of these HUMs return within you.

There are some traditions of particular masters that emphasize that when you exhale, the HUMs come from the right nostril and that when you inhale they return through the left nostril. But this is a method which is rather mixed with Tantrism. Yes, if you want to do that, that's just fine, particularly if you've had experience with Tantric practice. But if you don't particularly do that, it's just as fine.

In the Tantra of Dzogchen in the Upadesha, there's no such sophisticated explanation about this particular refinement of breathing out through one nostril and in through the other. Nor is it particularly said that the visualization must see the HUM as emerging from the nostril. But what is important is that with the visualization as it clarifies, so the HUM emerges from the body with the outbreath and return into the body with the in breath. And this is the practice we call gnyadab.

Sometimes you may find that when you breathe in, you actually feel that you're filled with the HUMs. This is not that you're suffering any harm. It's just that practice is working. Nor is it necessary that you perfectly do the practice so that while the HUMs are emerging, coming out of the body, you're totally centered on the central HUM.

Because in practice, you always have to understand the purpose and the meaning of the practice, where you're getting at, rather than involve yourself exaggeratedly in the details and specifics of technique. If you get too involved with technique, you get caught up in all of what they call tradition, all of that which the so-called traditions give exaggerated importance to. All of the traditions have their particular different methods, but a bottom what really matters, and what they have in common, is how the practice works. But if you know why you're doing what you're doing, then it becomes a simple matter. This is what we call gnyadab, and it's like a way of validating and authenticating all things.

We're very much used to seeing the external world as if it's hardened into ice, and all of our vision, all of that which presents itself, seems to us very far from our ideas. So this practice works to take us a little bit towards reintegration. With breathing, with visualization, we work all these aspects together.

Then after this we can say that we gradually get to what we call sorjug (sor-jug). Sorjug means something like "concretely getting into something." Now when I explain the practice you'll understand this label [later named tsaljong].

Once again we're sounding the HUM, and many many HUMs are emerging from the central HUM at the center of the body.

All of our material concepts, everything which finds itself before us, all the visual which presents itself or anything which arises in our ideas, these HUMs as they emerge eliminate all that, as if everything, our whole dimension, became the manifestation of these HUMs. No thing is left by these HUMs.

You don't have to get worried and fear that you're creating a disaster. Because the dense ice of our situation is very hard and there's no danger that we're going to break it that easily. We try to eliminate everything, whatever it may be. Also if we have any positive or negative concepts, we don't limit ourselves. We don't save the one and destroy the other, nothing like that.

In the moment that you're practicing, many strange ideas can arise. For example I'm here practicing and you're all sitting there. And with my HUMs as they emerge, they destroy all of you. It would seem that I'm performing some kind of evil action. Instead it's excellent. The more that I succeed in melting all of your ice, it would be a splendid thing. But it's not about to happen.

And then another kind of idea might come. You're inside some kind of sacred temple and you're doing the practice. In the temple there's all these wonderful statues and images of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas and the saints. And then again it's not that the human being would find himself with the altar behind him, but rather you have it before you.

So here I am and before me are all these wonderful things, this whole vision of the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas, etc. "How can I just destroy all that?" you think. "It's a terribly negative action, and you're creating a disaster." But Buddha is not a statue. These are just material symbols. There's nothing to worry about. So you don't have to be limited in any way when you do this practice.

Sometimes the first few times with your exhalation, sounding the HUMs, you eliminate everything. And then when you've got that visualization pretty well clear and present, then you start with inhaling, bringing all of the HUMs back. And as these HUMs return, you eliminate your own material body. And you keep repeating the exhalation and the inhalation of these HUMs, eliminating all materiality outside and of your own body. This is another way of doing the practice.

The principle here is more or less the same as in the chod. And the chod is an important practice. Why? Because it's a means for overcoming our attachments. And here too the way this works is that one overcomes one's attachment. And you repeat this many, many times. And this is called sorjug

And then there's another called tsaljong (rtsal-sbyong) [later named nyamtsal] and this means to train yourself. Let's say you visualize once more this central HUM. From this HUM come many HUMs which become a kind of chain of HUMs. I concentrate at the heart, this central HUM. From it come a series of HUMs and then the very first HUM to have come out which is the head of the chain remains fixed at the end of that space. We fix our attention on that farthest out HUM.

Then with the in-breath, we watch as all of those HUMs come back inside, telescope back inside. This is a way of training our ability in visualization, because ability in

visualization is also important. There are many means in practice which we must have ability in using. And on the path of transformation, we don't have this concern, because there, from the very beginning, the practice is based on visualization. But in the practice of Dzogchen, there aren't so many opportunities to train our visualization. It's this type of practice which enables one to develop one's capacity for visualization. You train yourself many times in this way.

And then there's another practice, the last one, which is called lamdujug (lam-du-'jug), and that means to travel. In this case you visualize the central HUM. You sound the HUM and visualize that from the central HUM emerges another HUM. And then when sounding the HUM, in the mind, you can let that HUM travel. You can let that HUM travel, or you can travel with it, to some place that you know and that you want to get to. You can sound the HUM, travel with the HUM and come back with the HUM.

And there are some methods where you don't visualize a second HUM, but rather it's the central HUM into which you are integrated so that you yourself are the HUM and are with the HUM which travels. But as a matter of fact, it has not the slightest importance which of them you do. You can try both and see which works most conveniently for you. But above all, the principle here is that this is a means of integrating a bit. You use respiration, visualization. You use the sound of the HUM, and you unite these through intention, and you can work also at traveling.

And you can do this just as you've trained your visualization through the chain of HUMs. Training like that with the train of HUMs, occurs very often. There's many many exercises of that order in Tantrism. And it's a very important way of obtaining mastery of prana. So here too we're working with the prana at the same time.

All the same, if you do each of these practices one by one, or if you follow the many masters who give a simplified version of this practice of sound, that is, you concentrate on the central HUM and while sounding the HUM, from the central HUM emerge thousands of HUMs moving in all directions. And they totally eliminate our dualistic universe, our dualistic conception. And then with the inbreath they all unify and come together, and in these traditions one practices this above all.

As I said earlier, you mustn't give exaggerated importance to the minutia, the tiny details, of how you do things. What's most important is that you get the sound, the concentration, and the letter working together. When we visualize a word without making any sound, or again when we visualize a word sounding the word, it works a bit differently in these two cases. Because the sound is linked to vibrations. And the sound, hearing the sound, very much helps us to have an awareness of that concentration. And this is more or less how you do the practice of sound. If you want to, we can right now stop and do it, if there's time. Let's do a little of it before we have tea.

In the first it's as if, with your outbreath, you fill all of the external world with HUMs and you transform everything into HUMs. Everything becomes a HUM. In the

second, rather than transforming everything into HUMs, you wipe everything out, creating void. It's not that the HUMs disappear, no. The HUMs remain present, although everything else is gone. It's a universe of HUMs. And then you reabsorb that whole universe of HUMs. That's on the inbreath. Now you've reintegrated it into your essence, nature and energy. We begin as always with the breathing. On each of these practices we're going to do five HUMs.

[Monday morning, 19-Jul-82]

We'll give a few general explanations prior to doing some practice together, because it's always very useful. There is a matter of principle which regards the teaching which is that all an individual must always understand it well through his own culture. But to take the teachings through your culture doesn't mean to transform or change the teaching. This is something that must be quite clearly present. Because when we learn a teaching, we apply it, and we enter into knowledge of this teaching. When one has acquired knowledge of a teaching, one becomes a kind of master of the teaching or one of the proprietors of the teaching. A person who follows the teaching also carries the teaching forward.

Certainly the teaching is not a matter of a race of people. It's not a party, a political party. So how can the teaching continue? It continues through those who know it and apply it. They are the carriers of the teaching. In this case, an individual who knows the teaching automatically becomes someone responsible for the teaching. In that case, if the teaching is misapplied, it ceases to function and to work. To work in the interest of the teaching means to work for a long term future without any possible deadline or horizon, because the human karmic vision will always continue. And the teaching is something that serves all human beings and serves all beings.

So you mustn't begin in a mistaken way. If you make a mistake, this leaves a trace which will then multiply in the future. If you are asked or obliged to explain, to teach something about the teaching, the first thing you do is observe yourself. Look at yourself carefully and discover whether you know the answer to the question or not. It's really true that in the Dzogchen teaching the first thing taught, employing the example of the mirror, is observing oneself. If you have a direct experience, you then know, really know, what it is you have to explain, communicate, transmit.

If you don't know, if one doesn't have the experience, using or being helped by some words you heard or some book you've read, you can carry the matter in an entirely wrong direction. So it's extremely important first of all, up front, to understand well and clearly, the meaning of the teaching. And to do that you don't base yourself on external matters, what appears, but you try to penetrate to the interior and depth of meaning of what is being communicated.

A person like Buddha Shakyamuni who manifested humanly is said to have given the teaching in three vehicles. But there's also a chronicle of six Buddhas, one appearing in each of the six lokas. It's also told that the Buddha had prior

incarnations, for example, that he manifested as an elephant to teach the teaching to the elephants. What this means is that a person like the Buddha, a realized being, entered into the culture of those to whom he was teaching. When the Buddha was illuminated, he no longer lived within the limits of any given culture. He no longer had a merely personal way of seeing, because he was beyond any such limitations.

But if one has to relate to people in order to teach them, one has to enter within the culture and limitations of outlook of the people one is speaking to. So if the Buddha taught in India, he entered into Indian culture. Had the Buddha lived in China, he surely would have presented himself and his teaching differently. If the Buddha had come to America, we have no idea how he would have presented himself. He might have manifested as a black cloud. Because one has to manifest and present oneself in a way that people can believe in, and by which they're convinced, and which they can relate to.

Many things that we find are related to the epoch in which the Buddha transmitted his teachings, for example, the way in which the Bodhisattvas are presented and visually presented in the Mahayana Sutras. And this is also used in the visualizations of the Yogatantra. An image like that of Avalokiteshvara or Vajrasattva or an idea like that of the Sambhogakaya as being full of the wealth and abundance of wisdom, these dimensions are presented in the costume, in the manner, of an Indian prince of the Buddha's time. And this represents the method that's used on that path.

And this is not necessary to change and transform. It may well be linked directly to the moment of transformation and which was first presented. We can use that idea. We know very well that one cannot invent the mandala. If mandala were merely a matter of an art or art form, one could certainly invent it. But if the mandala is the description of transmission of transformation of an actual manifestation, then one can't change or invent that. This means the method inherent in that task.

When one follows a teaching, that teaching is transmitting a knowledge. And this knowledge is developed through the method of its path. When a method is given, you can't change that method. You can't substitute Vajrasattva with Julius Caesar for example. Because this image is linked with that transmission, part of that transmission, from the beginning, from the way it has always been given. This is not what we mean by culture. Culture of the individual means all of his habits and attitudes and our habits and attitudes. Our way of being is linked with body, voice and mind. And this attitude is a way of understanding, can be a way of understanding the teaching and the path.

For example in Tibet, there were numberless usages, that way of living, that way of doing things. And that type of culture was adapted by the teaching. This is what we mean by culture. For example, a Tibetan will go into a temple and the first thing he'll do is a prostration. If he passes a temple, he'll turn so that it's on his right. But that's not the path. That's not a method of the path. That's an attitude and an expression of habit which is linked to an intention, a

good intention, a desire to accumulate merit.

How an individual behaves when he meets a master and when one follows a teaching, what is one's attitude and way of behaving, all this we call culture. The Tibetans have a system of their own as do the Indians. But also the Chinese and other nations have their characteristics. We mustn't confuse this with the path. Because many westerners go to India and learn this culture and are very satisfied to have learned it, and come back bringing it with them. I'm not saying that you can't study that culture. I'm not saying that you can't learn it. I'm not saying that you can't bring it back and make use of it. You can use it in your practice.

But it's not so very easy to learn and take in the entire culture of another country. We've already got lots to do just to meet our obligations, to obtain food and shelter and survive. If you have only a small time that you can commit to the teachings, and if instead of dedicating that time to learning something concrete and useable as practice, you devote it to learning and assimilating a foreign culture, that's really a waste of time.

In this case you have to know how to use your own culture, because every individual has his own culture. And your own culture, your own attitude and way of understanding, is very easy for you and very near at hand. When you know how to use your own culture and understand through it, then it's much, much easier to get to the actual meaning of the teaching. But you mustn't confuse this with changing or transforming the teaching.

Many people think that the way of teaching in the Buddhist tradition, whether it be Sutric or Tantric, is very difficult and too complicated to transmit to westerners. And so a splendid idea is born. So let's mix it up a bit with western psychology and we can get rid of all the name and titles and labels and the forms of the teaching. And there are those who do this nowadays. This is perfectly characteristic of our human condition. Either we go too far left or too far right. Since we remain always in the dualistic situation, we only know these two excesses.

We don't know how to take the third way. And according to me, that's just no good at all. Because the teaching is not just philosophy. If it were just philosophy, if it were just a matter of getting a notion into your mind, then it would be fine.

But many of the people who are following the teaching are actually seeking some kind of truth. That is to say, they're seeking a real answer to their need for realization. And a teaching possesses its transmission. Through transmission one develops toward realization. It's not sufficient to just jabber about something and multiply our ideas and fecundate our ideas. The teaching must not be carried, must not be brought down, to the level of duping people.

If we're talking about a teaching we have to make explicit and make understood what the principle of that teaching is. We know very well that in the teaching there exist hundreds of different methods. If the teaching can penetrate into the culture of the individual, it's not that there aren't other ways it could proceed. This notion of

transforming the teaching, of modernizing the teaching or changing it in some way, comes from insufficient knowledge of the teaching and of all its various ways of being used.

For example, some monks say that the Vinaya, the moral code of the monks, has to be transformed or updated. So this is the kind of thing they're doing every so often in the ecumenical councils of the Catholic Church. But the Catholic Church possesses the authority of the Pope, so it seems to me that perhaps they can do that.

But the Vinaya was born in the time that the Buddha lived. It's not that the Vinaya was created by the Buddha and his disciples, holding a congress and voting and passing resolutions for each time of the rules. There's nothing to transform in the Vinaya. To transform the Vinaya you'd have to invite the Buddha to be present and to promulgate the new rules. If no one is in the position to invite the Buddha to come here, how can you possibly change the rules?

And then, whoever said you have to be a monk? If you don't like those rules, if you can't manage with the Vinaya, drop being a monk. There are innumerable other methods which were taught. As for example, as we've said, that of the Mahayana Sutras. All of these Bodhisattvas who are presented there are not, by any means, monks. Wanting to, you can perfectly well practice as in the Mahayana Sutras. If this doesn't suit you, there is another method.

So there are many different individuals living in many different conditions, and for each of these we find a teaching. But if someone feels that they're obliged to change the teachings because they can't name it by its real name, externally, that it would be considered too limited a thing, why doesn't he teach something like Dzogchen in which there are absolutely no external limits. If he doesn't find that a good thing, it's because his human limits are unchanged. This is a point that is extremely important to understand well.

Or people go too far in adopting the culture which was historically identified with the teachings. And they don't know how to use their own culture. Or they go so far in adapting the teachings to the new culture that it no longer has the taste and quality of the teachings. This is typical of our limited situation. And this is very important to understand, above all, for the salvation and preservation of the teaching.

When one makes an error, one is breeding many new errors for the future. If one hasn't yet begun, and it still all remains to be done, then there's still a chance of going right. If I make a mistake, myself, my own mind, I haven't said anything yet, I can still correct myself when I notice it. But if I start applying for others, putting into action for others something mistaken, then it's a very, very grave mistake. At this point I'm speaking of the responsibility of every one of us who is interested in the teachings.

Then another thing. Much is said of the secrets of the teaching. What they mean by that is that you mustn't speak of the teaching; you must do nothing with it. And this too is all wrong. The teaching is communicated to anyone who is genuinely interested. Because the teaching works only when a person is interested and enters into the teaching. And

therefore it's no secret to that person. But the whole teaching is a secret to a person who isn't interested.

But in general, we do things completely backwards. Everyone's convinced that they have to publicize the teaching, advertise it. And they do so in the same way that soap is marketed. We go to the supermarket. We find at least ten different brands of soap. After a few months, there's a new brand on the market, because people got a little bored with the old brand, or because they've given a new name and made new claims for some fantastic new soap, and they're advertising it.

Everybody thinks that's fabulous and they start buying it. After all, they actually don't find it all that fantastic after they use it. If they keep saying that soap is so fantastic, it isn't going to work anymore. It's sufficient to change the box and change the name, and you can once again claim that it's fantastic. So people have a slightly refreshed, renewed idea of what's available.

And this is a bit how the teaching is presented these days. They're popping up on all sides, these variations of the teaching under bright new names, or in Indian style or in Tibetan style or in Chinese style, or whatever. Perhaps tomorrow they'll figure out a newer, stranger name and everybody will run there. In this way, the teaching is becoming some kind of past time or activity. This type of thing, we can't really say where it's going to end or what the consequences are going to be.

In any case, if we're talking about the real teaching, if people are interested, there's nothing to hide. But certainly, above all for the Dzogchen teaching, the teaching is not something to condition people with. So one never insists or obliges people or makes any effort to convince or persuade people to participate. We also know about, and believe a bit in, what we call karma. Because the individual always lives in the relative situation. The relative situation or condition is always linked to karma.

If one has some participation and interest in a teaching like the Dzogchen teaching, that means that there's some precise karmic cause. If one has a karma, a prime cause, then secondary causes can always arise. One never can predict or know because as we say, secondary causes don't obey some kind of program. Just as we're here now, it hasn't been in some sense programmed, pre-ordained, that by someone knowing this place, this is where we would all meet. This is how things proceed, as they can.

So it's very difficult to foresee the secondary causes of any set of circumstances. The teaching always proceeds through the secondary causes of each individual. So the conclusion is that it's extremely important to know how to utilize your own culture and understand through your culture and at the same time it's important not to change or transform the teachings.

Let's take for example the red book that we use for the practice in the evening. It begins with taking refuge in the style and system of the Mahayana Sutras. And this also exists in the Hinayana, Namo Buddha, Nama Dharma, Namo Sangha. Then, after that come verses of Bodhicitta, commitment to Bodhicitta

which is also in the style of the Mahayana Sutras.

Then we proceed with practice typical of Tantrism utilizing the path of transformation, when we do the visualization of Padmasambhava with the seven verses with the OM, AH, and HUM in his locations from which rays of light reach us. This is characteristic of the Yogatantra style. Then we also have the practice of the chod (gcod) which is another style altogether of practice. And then at the end we always sing the song of the vajra to take us into the practice of contemplation, characteristic of the style of the Dzogchen practice.

This is so that we can have the experience and application of all these different methods so that we can acquire a mastery, a knowledge, of all different methods. Because a practitioner must know pretty well how all the different methods work. In this case, he can actually make use of his own culture. We constantly say that this red book is not a practice which one is obliged to do every day. But when an individual feels like doing something, it's there to be used.

What we do ask you to constantly do is not be distracted. As we said yesterday, that master Yontan Dorjepa (??) said, "When am I ever distracted?" This is the principle of Dzogchen. It all begins right there. When one is never distracted, it's there, from there, that one's consciousness, one's clarity and awareness, develop.

And that is also the basis of that famous theme, compassion. Because if you know what it means for someone to find himself beyond the dualistic situation, then one also knows what it means for an individual to find himself in that dualistic condition and to keep transmigrating. Thus, if I've real knowledge of my own experience, I understand the condition of the other.

So there's no necessity for a specialized explanation of compassion, but rather compassion is linked to our relative situation. And all of the things in general that we apply and make use of, are linked to this energy of compassion. In this way, one becomes a practitioner. And one can find a simple way of applying it in one's life. This is a very important matter for having full awareness, full presence, of these two different considerations.

And now we'll talk a little bit about something that has to do with practice. We've spoken of the practice of the body and of the voice. Now we'll talk a bit about the practice of the mind. In the mind practice of the rishan, in the fundamental Tantra of the Upadesha, the Drathaljur, the mind practice which is basically given is that of searching for thoughts, searching for their origin, their present location, where they disappear to.

For example, you're in a calm state and a thought arises. As soon as the thought arises you stop and look where it comes from. You look into the base of it, where it came out of. And at base, you'll find where it came from is nothing at all. If I just say I don't find anything, that's a mere concept. If one actually observes, then finding or not finding something is something that you actually understand on your own. Then at the same level, in the same way, by actual

observation, you examine where the thought is now located. And then you examine how the thought disappears and where it disappears to.

And these three we call jung nay dro (byung gnas 'gro), the arising, the remaining, and the disappearing of the thought. One performs this research in order to really discover that there's nothing there. There's nothing behind the thought. This practice is also much used in the Mahayana Sutras and above all used by the Kagyudpa masters very, very much. Certain of the masters in the mountains when disciples arrive, the first task that they're given is that of searching at great length for the origin and location of thought. They can perform this work of observation through weeks and weeks.

My father told me one time, he went to see a Kagyudpa master who's called ?? who was really a fantastic master and he was high on a mountain. There were many of his disciples thereabouts who were in shut caves, closed in the mountain, some for three years, some for seven and the like. My father went to him and stayed there about a month to receive teachings about the mind. He said there were seven or eight people who were following his teaching. They went up each day to him to receive an explanation and teaching about meditation.

For more than a week, each day he told them to look into where thought comes from ... [tape gap] ... Then the day after when they would go back up to receive teachings he would ask them "What have you found? Where does thought arise from?" Finally, somebody answered that they hadn't yet found anything. Some didn't even understand how you're supposed to do it. Then he would once again explain that immediately as a thought arises, you observe right where that thought is. You observe that thought and try to locate where it has come from. And then he would say "When you've found the answer, when you've found where the thought comes from, you come and tell me."

And so they followed this for many days. Many of them were a bit tired and sick of it, because he wasn't giving them any teaching, and they weren't finding the answer. Moreover, up there on that mountain where they were living, there was nothing to do. If he had at least given them something to do, some visualization, to imagine Vajrasattva or recite a mantra, they could have at least found some way to kill time. But day in, day out, looking for the origin of thought, finding nothing at all, was very boring.

When about six days had passed, one morning they went back to the master. There was an old man with them. This old man was very content before they went into the master. He was chuckling to himself and saying to the others "Well, I've resolved the problem. I found the solution." Naturally, he didn't tell them what the answer was. When they got into the master, the master asked each individual what he had found, and each of them answered that they hadn't found anything.

The old man, with much contentment, answered "I've finally found something." The master said, "What have you found and how did you find it?" He answered that as soon as the thought arose he observed it instantly, and what he found was something slightly brownish like a little ball, and it

seems as if sometimes it's there, and sometimes it's not there. Is that what I'm supposed to be finding?"

The master said, "Maybe it's better not to observe that, not to stare at that little brown thing." And so to that old man he gave a Vajrasattva practice and had him recite mantras, and to the others who hadn't found anything, he began to explain a bit about how to move on, how to proceed. And so it was in this connection that my father told me how this master had people continue this searching for thought for long, long times.

And then there are certain traditions, also in the Gelugpa school, also in the teaching of Mahamudra, they also give much importance to this searching for thought. They give importance to the illustration that, for example, in a house, there's a snake. If one has a conviction that somewhere in the house there's a snake and one gives importance to it, one has to remove all the furniture and search the whole house to convince oneself there is no snake.

In short, this particular practice is not exclusive to Dzogchen but is done in all different teachings. The fundamental purpose is to discover that it's really true that there's nothing there. You remember that it's fundamental when we explain the primordial state in the Dzogchen teaching, we speak of the three primordial wisdoms, the essence, the nature, and the energy. What we call the essence is that void that we find when we observe and find nothing there. But even though we find nothing there, thought continues constantly to arise and that's what we call the nature. And now we're working in a practical fact with these two, essence and nature, at the same time.

Then in the Dzogchen teaching there are also methods for working on this. For example, when I observe a thought and it disappears and I find nothing there, and then a moment later the next thought arises and I once again observe that and it once again disappears, it seems almost as if thoughts multiply and are more frequent. In this case, many masters have their disciples work mentally. For example, they tell them to block their thoughts, stop their thoughts from coming. Blocking thought is not contemplation. It's work, a working of the mind. You mustn't imagine that this is a principal practice.

One time I met a young man and he told me "I know Zen." He wanted to know what difference there was between Zen and Dzogchen. I said to him at that time "I really don't know what the difference may be between Zen and Dzogchen. It all depends on your knowledge. If you really know Zen, then probably you also know Dzogchen. Explain to me just what you've understood." He explained to me that he had understood that in Zen you have to block thought. When you've blocked thought you find yourself in a state of void. I said "For me, that's not the case. But I haven't studied Zen very deeply so I can't say anything." But I explained to him a bit what one could say is the general principle of Buddhism deriving from the Sutras. But he was absolutely convinced of what he had understood.

Very often, this kind of thing happens. One may have heard from a master some partial explanation and imagine that that's the principal thing. For example, when we do a

retreat, from the beginning of the retreat to the end of the retreat, I try to explain many, many things in a global way. One day, an individual comes and then he immediately leaves. Let's say that when he arrived, at that moment I was explaining how the logic of the mind functions. And he's understood Dzogchen is about how the logic functions. This is the same way in which this individual had understood that how to block thought is Zen. But you mustn't confuse these matters.

In the Dzogchen teaching too, certain masters even give their students training in blocking thought. Some individual, when he's in position and in a state of shinay, many, many thoughts begin to boil and bubble. "Try to stop them." And naturally when you try to stop them, they redouble and become more and more, until you finally get it through your head that there is no way to block thought. Then you begin to understand that what you have to do is relax and let go, and observe the presence of thought.

Or sometimes the masters give training to individuals, who have the need, to create more thoughts. "Don't leave even the tiniest space without thought. Try to think of everything possible in the most mixed up way possible till you're practically going crazy", until that individual is just so sick of it he can't think at all anymore, and then finally he too finds a way of relaxing and letting go. Because the methods are always appropriate to the condition of the particular individual.

So the fundamental method of mind is what we spoke of as jung nay dro, how thought arises, how it remains, how it disappears. Also where thought arises, where it stays, where it disappears to, is there a place, is there a direction, it takes? If it's linked to time or not. That is to say, observing all the working of the mind. In this way you discover totally that there's nothing concrete there.

We use the word "observe" and we use it in two ways. We speak of mental observation as if looking really, with commitment, stopping to see. There's another modality which we also call observation. And that is finding yourself in a state of observation without effort, without working of the mind, without any forcing. And this sense of observation we very much use when speaking of contemplation. If you don't make this distinction you might blunder into thinking that in contemplation there is something like an effort or a work of the mind.

So now in regard to the rushan, we've explained the purification of the six lokas, the practices of the body, of the voice, and of the mind. There are also other practices much used in the rushan. There are the set of practices called the semzin (sems-'dzin). There are 21 semzin found in the Tantra of the Drathaljur. All of these are working of mind. They involve a method for taking you to contemplation. But it's not like a gradual method in which you have to do this first before you do that other.

But it's very important that you know these methods. Because when one does contemplation, the individual who's doing contemplation is a being with a material body, and the material body is linked with all of the elements. And

therefore you can always encounter obstacles or problems. All of these semzin help to overcome one kind of obstacle or another.

This does not mean that there are obstacles in the state of contemplation. Contemplation is, from the beginning, beyond any obstacles. Being in contemplation means to be in the condition of the primordial state. In that, there can be no obstacle or impediment. But we always have to be mindful of our material condition, which is linked to our energy. So here, all of those practices of the semzin and all the other practices of the mind can be very useful. That's the explanation and now we can finish. It's still early. We'll do one last practice of the purification of the six lokas. We thus will have done it for three days.

[Monday afternoon, 19-Jul-82]

All these practices are called khorde rushan, these practices he's been giving. That is, they're to be understood as a kind of preparation for entering into contemplation. Exactly if your mind is full of stuff, these are the practices that you do to enable you then to enter into contemplation.

We'll continue a bit to explain still further in regard to the rushan. Because there are many, many ways above all to do this practice of the mind. There are some practices which are taught by, certain series of the Dzogchen Nyingthig, for example what's called training of the mind toward mitogpa (mi-rtog-pa). Mitogpa is generally understood as meaning a state of void, of emptiness of mind, in which no thought is present. Or it's understood as a state in which thought is present but one is not conditioned by thought.

This word "mitogpa" is open to various interpretations. In the Sutric teachings of Buddhism it's considered as a state in which no thought is present. But in the teachings of Dzogchen for example, and in particular the Longde series where the term mitogpa is used, it means that thought is present but the person is not conditioned or governed in any way by his thought.

Togpa means to think. At times, togpa means to reason. Mi is a negative. So mitogpa means not thinking or not reasoning. And there's a bit of difference between the two. To say that one isn't thinking means that thoughts are not present. To say that one is not reasoning can imply that thoughts are nonetheless present.

In the case now where we use mitogpa, it may mean both. That is, one is not seeking something particular, but we're working on what we spoke of earlier as the separation, the sorting out, of mind from the nature of the mind. As one gets a bit trained in these methods, one becomes familiar with this distinction.

So there are explanations of three different methods for arriving at mitogpa. The first of these is called detong mitogpa (bde-stong mi-rtog-pa). De refers to the sensation of pleasure, and tong means void. So we're referring to the very state of this. The mitogpa of this state in which there is void and pleasurable sensation would involve either no thought being present or thought, yes, being present but not governing the person. This is one.

Another is called saltong mitogpa (gsal-stong mi-rtog-pa). Sal means clarity, and tong again means void. And thus it's through the union of these two methods that one arrives in the state of mitogpa. This is another way.

Then there's a third called chonyid mitogpa (chos-nyid mi-rtog-pa). Cho means Dharma, existence, all that is. And nyid means the very state of things, the condition of. This is what in Sanskrit is called the Dharmata. So in this case one finds oneself in the state of mitogpa through this condition, that is, the state of things as they are.

These are, in short, three different ways of training the mind. Training oneself one finds oneself in one or more of these ways. One finds oneself in the state of mitogpa. And what have you got if you've gotten yourself into a state of mitogpa? It means that it's easier for you to get into contemplation. But don't for a moment think that the state of mitogpa is the state of contemplation as we understand it in Dzogchen. This is why we're speaking of these as ways of training the mind.

Let's speak of the first one, detong mitogpa. This principle, the use of pleasurable sensation, is very frequently found in Tantrism. It's above all linked with transformation into a joyous heruka. And here the method is that of the union of dewa (bde-ba) and tongpa (stong-pa). In Tantrism this method may be explained as the principal path. But in Dzogchen teaching, this is not a principal path. But it's used as a means for training the mind and through this one can find, one can obtain, a concrete experience.

This dewa, that is, the pleasurable feeling or feeling of pleasure, is something linked with our breathing and with our concentration. It's also linked to physical position and movement. You've heard, all of you, about the much spoken of practice of tummo which appears in Tantrism. It may be that for Tantrism, tummo is something very secret. Why secret? Because it proceeds by way of initiation in transformation.

There exists in Tantrism a phrase called kyerim (bskyed-rim) which means making progress in visualization. And then that's followed by dzogrim (rdzogs-rim). And then when you arrive at dzogrim, you get the explanation of tummo. And so the first passage, the first approximation, in this transformation is to visualize oneself in certain ways. If one doesn't know any of this and without that knowledge attempts to practice some tummo, that's simply ridiculous. But you mustn't imagine that in the Dzogchen we're actually teaching the practice of tummo. But here in this practice, the principle involved is very close, or even one could say, the very same principle.

First of all, if one has learned yantra for example, you make use of that visualization of the channels. And many practitioners of Dzogchen are rather familiar with the usual way of proceeding in Tantrism. So we needn't pause to explain detail by detail. If one hears the central and solar and lunar canals spoken of, one already understands and knows what's involved. Such a person is also already capable of visualizing the chakras.

Now in this training practice, it's not necessary to visualize all the chakras in all of the details in which they

are commonly visualized. But what mustn't be lacking is the central channel. The central channel is utilized at various points in the Dzogchen practice. You visualize at the center of the body this central channel. You recall that the central channel is normally visualized as having four characteristics. It's transparent. It's luminous. It is open at the crown of the head and wider, and it's closed and narrower just below the navel, four finger widths below the navel. It's very straight. And these characteristics are always applicable, always present, whenever one visualizes the central channel.

In the Dzogchen teaching, no precise dimensions are given, or hardly ever are given, for the central channel. The instructions given in Tantrism in general are that the width of the dimensions of the channel are almost precisely those of the littlest finger. Or it's also said that it's the dimensions of a stalk of grain. At other times it's said that the dimensions are that of the thumb. In short, various methods are used.

But in yantra yoga for example, you visualize the channel as having the dimension it first has the moment it comes to mind, whatever that may be. And then many times, we have practice in training ourselves in seeing the central channel thusly. Sometimes we visualize the central channel and then expand it until it's larger than the body. Sometimes we continue concentrating and see it bigger than the house, bigger than the world, bigger than the universe. Then we condense it back to dimensions so slight and subtle that it's almost invisible. For which reason we can say that it's of no importance to define precisely the dimension of the central channel. What is important is that you have an idea of the central channel, that you visualize it and that there is for you, your sense of awareness, your presence, of something there.

There are considerations of the central channel in Tantrism is something physically existent. In Dzogchen, it's not considered as something physically existent, but always as representing an energy, and as presenting the reality of energy. So that when you visualize the central, solar and lunar channels you visualize each of these in a different way. And that depends on what you're using them for and in what way.

For example, when you are unifying the solar and lunar energies and unifying them with the chakras there are various different ways of visualizing them. Were it the case that this was something physically existent, then obviously you'd have to respect its physical reality. Therefore we consider important that we visualize and put into action, these channels, the central and other channels.

And then, in the practice of tummo for example, it's extremely important that we consider the two subsidiary channels as symbols of the solar and lunar energy. And we have as further symbols of these two energies, the words HAM and A-TUNG. You remember that also in our practice of the chod we have the HAM and the A-TUNG. The Tibetan letter for the HAM is somewhat round. This is not the HUM but the HAM. That is always used in the Tantric practices of this kind, but in Dzogchen we can also use a bead.

One need not complicate excessively things, particularly if one doesn't understand them too well. For a practitioner of Tantra, it's very simple if one says "A-TUNG and HAM". He immediately understands what's involved. If however, one is not a practitioner of Tantrism, then to start right at the beginning with the A-TUNG and HAM, to go back and rebegin that way, is a complication of the whole matter. In this case, one proceeds on the real meaning rather.

The real meaning is that the HAM or white pellet, white bead, is the symbol of the nectar. Or one can speak of it as the paternal cause. That's visualized at the center of the head chakra as a white bead. At the bottom of the central channel, you concentrate either on a triangular-shaped flame, or you can call that the A-TUNG. The A-TUNG is actually a piece of Tibetan writing. It's a corner of the letter AH which looks like a triangle. And that's a symbol of the energy or of the maternal, the female cause.

The paternal cause refers to the fact that a male can create, can give, the cause for an eventual being's birth. And the maternal energy refers to the fact that through the energy force of the mother, the receptive energy of the mother, that being can come into existence. This is how we get born. What does a father do? Put that sperm or cause there ... [tape gap] ... Because the mother has the capacity for this gestation or development. And the seed of the father is only a cause. And this set of facts is symbolized by the white bead or pellet, and the red flame of the maternal cause.

In Tantrism there's a lot of explanation about this and also about practices involving it. We're not going to that level at this point. We're operating in a somewhat simpler way. Because simple is important and essential. In Tantrism, there are many discussions and considerations as to the methods of detong and saltong. What are the methods most appropriate for developing the possibilities of the male?, of a female? And practice becomes in a certain sense complicated.

In Dzogchen, there isn't this kind of complication. Because the Dzogchen teaching goes a bit by the basic meaning. Now why am I explaining this basic meaning? You concentrate or visualize at the very top of this central channel, this white bead or pellet. This is true whether you're a woman or a man. You do this visualization, and at bottom, the red flame.

While doing this visualization of the white pellet and the red flame, you do a held breath. While holding the breath, you force upward and there are two principal motivations for this. One is that when you pull the pelvic floor, the bottom of the body up, there's a sensation. And the other is that when you pull up down there you're making this solar energy work. You accompany this tightening with the concentration and it's as if you've lit this fire. Through the energy of that fire, the white pellet or drop melts. This white pellet or drop represents feeling, sensation.

When you concentrate on this white drop melting through the development and intensification of the heat from the flame, you surely experience a sensation. And the sensation is not different for male and female. This is called dewa.

It's a presence, an immediate awareness, of some kind of pleasurable sensation. When you have this sensation it doesn't mean that you start saying "Wow, how beautiful," and become conditioned by this sensation. But rather that you have full presence, full awareness, in what you're feeling. That is, you're fully present, also in this dimension of sensation.

That is, with this detong, with this pleasurable feeling, you are in a situation, a dimension that isn't explained, that can't be put into words. That is the tongpa, the shunyata or emptiness. You observe this awareness. You are conscious of this perceiving and you find a state which in no way can be defined. But it's not as if you'd stayed within some kind of darkness and there was no presence, no awareness. There is something concretely present but there's no way to define it. This state, observing it, observing your pure presence of it, is what we call detong mitogpa.

And training this a little bit is very, very important. Why is it important? Because in general, all of us men and women, are together with other people, that is, we're mated in couples. None of us here are monks. And people always are asking "We have sexual contact. What can you do with that?" Many people come and say "We want a teaching about how you apply sexual practice."

And that's not easy. It's very, very complicated. If we stop to examine how it's explained in Tantrism, one has to have absolutely maximal capacity to begin to apply such methods. You know that this is true not only for Buddhist Tantrism, but you've all read about similarly complicated methods in Taoism and Hinduism and the like. There's one point when you even feel like giving it all up. But that's not true because you do have to live in a human condition.

So one has to be knowledgeable about it. To be conscious about this means getting to the real meaning of it. Not everybody is going to be a fabulous yogi. So we stop and examine what is the actual purpose for which, in Tantrism, these sexual practices are made use of. And what is fundamental is the development of pleasurable sensation. Normally we talk about all of the passions which are present through sensation. So this becomes a way of transforming and then ultimately a way of self-liberating. And sexual contact is something very much present in our lives and in which we can have much presence and awareness.

Sexuality is present not just for human beings but dogs, cats. All creatures know how to apply it. And they even all like it. And why do they all like it? Because there's a pleasurable sensation there. But it's not enough, just the awareness of pleasure. If you just know how to feel pleasure, that can still be a method of conditioning yourself. You can see dogs and cats are constantly applying this technique without becoming realized. Also many human beings are at work all their lives on this point, without ever achieving realization.

So it's not just enough to say that you know how to do it quite well. That's not adequate. And it's not just sufficient to be expert at what today all the books describe, the technique of love or something of the kind. It's

considered that through these techniques one has to, or can, develop to the maximum, one's enjoyment of sensation of pleasure. If you develop sensation and enjoyment to the maximum and know how to govern it, that's perfect. But if you're conditioned by it, then to charge up even further only worsens things. So we're talking about two very distinct things here.

So to apply or put into action the principle of sensation, of feeling, means that you'll have to work in this dimension. I've already said yesterday, the principle of contact between male and female, the principle for a human being is to find yourself in your own dimension, to govern your dimension, not to be governed or conditioned. Practice doesn't mean that you let yourself be conditioned by someone. Practice means from the very beginning that you find and develop your state, the state of your own.

So also in regard to practice with pleasurable feeling and sensation, above all you govern yourself. You learn to govern yourself and not be governed. So if you're not conditioned by this pleasurable sensation, then it becomes a real means for realization. Somebody could get worried at this point and say "Well, then you don't feel anything as you normally would?" People do think these things.

But you must remember in the state of contemplation, any and everything can happen. If we want to become a practitioner, then everything, all of our daily life, all of our activity, our movement, our doing and being, must enter into a state of contemplation. Even if we don't reach that point, at least we mustn't be conditioned. We mustn't permit ourselves to be conditioned.

So it's very important to train ourselves in this type of practice. Otherwise you get somebody who says "Oh, I'm a practitioner of Dzogchen. I know Dzogchen very well." But to know Dzogchen means nothing at all if you don't find yourself in the state of Dzogchen. In that case, the most you've done is that you've made a collection, like a collection of books or collection of pieces of knowledge. So this is the method we call detong mitogpa. And you can practice it again and again and again.

Then if one has had experience or teaching of tummo, it's excellent to link this practice up with your doing tummo. In practice, in the practice of Dzogchen, there are no limits to be drawn. But one mustn't go and vulgarize certain methods of Tantrism with the excuse of Dzogchen. For which reason, I can't go beyond explaining to you the use made in Dzogchen of the methods of detong.

Then there's what is called saltong mitogpa. This is above all a way of training the prana, the vital energy. Now the principle consideration is not, as it just was, sensation or pleasurable feeling. First of all you breathe in and out many times, a deep breathing. And also with the awareness, or visualization of the channels if you have experience of that.

Then, as you breathe out it's as if you dissolve all of our vision, all of that which presents itself. All of it dissolves into the pure openness of space. Space is always considered a bit blue like the sky, as if you were gazing into a limpid, blue sky. Everything dissolves as you breathe out.

Then you breathe in again. You breathe in as if you were breathing in all of the air that fills that space, as if you were breathing in all of that blue air. And you fill your body with that blue air.

You may repeat this breathing cycle, in and out. There are certain times or specified visualizations. But it's sufficient to do something very simple, just fixing on this inbreathing and out breathing. In this way, you experience a feeling, a sensation of this mitogpa, this void. And this is a way of practicing. Very simple.

Then there's that one called chonyid mitogpa. We've spoken of the Dharmata. In this case, you don't control either breathing or position very much. You just let go a bit and be relaxed. Whatever comes to mind, you don't judge it in any way, nor do you follow it in any way, nor do you create anything there. You simply let whatever comes to mind come and go.

But you don't at any point cease noticing what's coming and going in mind. If your eyes are open, wherever you're looking at, you don't move your eyes. It's of no importance if you fix your gaze on some particular object or not. But in any case, the eyes are arrested, static. And you just let thought run. . You let think whatever wants to be thought. You let your breathing come naturally. In this way arises an immediate awareness of mitogpa, a sense or presence of mitogpa or void.

These are three means, it is said, for training the mind in mitogpa. The first is very much linked to sensation. The second is very much linked with clarity. But clarity doesn't mean something concrete, a specific form, a specific color. But it is always the sense of presence, the awareness, of a whole dimension. And in the third, is defined a state of void which can't be defined. And these are three means that are used for the training of mind. And now the explanation is over.

Tea and yantra. And it wouldn't be bad to do a bit more yantra. Many of you don't know yantra, and doing a retreat, it's an ideal time to profit by learning the movements of yantra. Many people don't live normally among a group of persons who know how to do yantra. And one day you may find you want to do some yantra, and you don't know how. So it's convenient. You've got an advantage here when you can learn some.

[Monday evening, 19-Jul-82]

Since the teachings of the Upadesha series of Dzogchen are for the most part terma, there are many which take the title nyingthig. I'd like to talk a little today about what terma is. Because many people may not have a precise idea of this. And yesterday someone asked me how one could understand if a terma is authentic or not. And this is a question that many people pose. Because there are many, many considerations which we can have in regard to terma. And one can't simply believe and follow everything that happens to be said. So also at the intellectual and scholarly level when terma is spoken of, it's not so easy to authenticate or distinguish true from false.

The principle of terma involves two fundamental concerns. First of all, terma can be something material. In this first category it can be something hidden by someone that's then found. And it could be hidden by a human being or by some other type of being. And there may be many things which are hidden from us and which are not commonly or easily visible. But that doesn't necessarily mean that it's hidden in some hole or under the earth particularly.

Then in particular in Tibet, it's considered that in the time of Padmasambhava, many things were hidden. Above all by Padmasambhava's disciples, these things were deliberately hidden with the expectation and preparation that these things would be refound at a later and opportune time by these same persons in a successive rebirth. These are the tertons, that is, the people who discover terma. And in fact, there are fantastic and extraordinary tertons and ways in which they've discovered terma. And this has really happened.

But we can't consider that all of them are so extraordinary. Many forgeries can occur, because man lives always in his limitations and in his dualistic situation. And there always continues to exist therefore, good and bad, and therefore good people and bad ones. There are people who have the ambition of becoming famous and important. And they might pretend to be tertons and to have discovered something. And many people can easily confuse them with a true terton. This would be a person who is not truly interested in transmitting a knowledge. It's sufficient for him that he shows himself off in some way so as to become important.

And there are many stories of these pseudo tertons, half terton. And it can happen that an intellectual or scholar, someone who operates at the conceptual level, reading about these defective tertons or studying the history and discovering that they're at fault, then decides that they're all false. This too is wrong because there are genuine and extraordinary tertons.

I'll give an example of a false terton. In a certain period in eastern Tibet, there was someone who went everywhere proclaiming himself a realized being and a great terton. He wore long white robes with his hair all bound up, conch earrings and splendid ornaments. And after a brief period he had a very substantial following. And he had some lucky successes that seemed really extraordinary events. So he acquired a position in which many people honored him.

But it's not particularly difficult to acquire prestige

and importance if you go along to a group of peasants who have simple and ignorant faith, who have a minimum of cleverness. It's enough to present yourself well and know how to do some rituals. And so at a certain moment he had a real following. He went everywhere very elegantly with a retinue of monks and lay people and so forth. So he went into the north of eastern Tibet where the nomads are. And every so often he proclaimed that he had discovered some statue or some object. No one knew if he was really discovering something or not.

On one occasion he announced that he wanted to discover a very, very important statue of Padmasambhava. And he wanted to make the discovery and unearth it publicly. He performed a great ceremony to attract everyone's attention, but he hadn't prepared his terma with sufficient cleverness. Because there were a number of monks of another tendency who were against him. And they'd done elaborate investigation of everything, all of his preparations, and they shadowed him for months and months. And they had seen, in preparation for the discovery of terma, he had put something under a rock.

So the night before the ceremony they went and took away what he'd put there, and they substituted for it a bag of shit. So without knowing anything, he performed an elaborate ceremony and, with a great public present, he unearthed this terma of shit. He was rather surprised because he was convinced that a statue of Padmasambhava would appear. And everybody said "What happened?" He said "This terma has been destroyed."

Later everybody learned what had happened because his opponents made it known. Then he was brought for trial before the King of Derge and in fact he was punished, because this kind of behavior obviously casts all of terma in a bad light. This was a tertön who was publicly exposed as false, but there are many tertöns who aren't publicly exposed as false. So you can't simply take on faith whatever happens to be said. Sometimes the tertön himself doesn't grasp whether something is genuinely a ter or not.

But now I'll explain how certain genuine and authentic tertön behave. For example, we speak of gongter (dgongs-gter), that is, ter of the mind. And I have a direct experience with my master, Changchub Dorje, who was a great tertön. He dictated a large volume of gongter to me which I wrote down. This is a series of teachings called the kändu chujijan ?? It was a teaching given in the time of Padmasambhava. And there's a brief summary of this teaching given in the Longchen Nyingthig of Jigmay Lingpa.

But in general when my master would dictate, there would be a disciple of his called Abusudan ?? who would sit there taking the dictation. This disciple Abusudan was very rapid in writing and taking dictation. To my master would come this spontaneous knowledge which he would immediately dictate. But he didn't know how to write, because he had never had an education and had never learned to write. Not only writing, but he wasn't even capable of reading very well. The teaching that he had had was the Dzogchen teaching, for example, directly from a teacher in spoken form. And he had done practice and had developed his knowledge. So he was very far from intellectual study.

For example, Abusudan told me that when he first met the master, the master had already dictated two or three texts which had been written down by his disciples. And some of these early disciples had described how they had written this down. One time the master dictated a text about the Mamo and in this case there were many strange mantras. The master was dictating and having one of the disciples write it down. And at the very beginning at that time he didn't have particularly intellectual or educated disciples, because he had no important recognition or social position.

And so he told him to write down a mantra which began with "jo". And so the man who was writing it down said "How do I write that?" Because he didn't know how to write it. It's not a normal Tibetan word. The master didn't know how to explain it to him because he didn't know how to write. In answer he said "Write jo like jo". And this was told to me by this Abusudan, as he explained that the master had always dictated spontaneously. So Abusudan, who was very well versed in writing and grammar, could take these things down with extreme care.

When I was there, the master asked me to take the dictation because Abusudan could no longer see very well. And then as a second consideration, I was certainly much more rapid in writing than Abusudan and moreover, I was someone who was quite dependable as far as the grammar went because I knew it very well. So I agreed to do the writing. So every day I found that I was writing something like thirty pages, long Tibetan pages that have a front and a back. So there are six lines on each side. Moreover, it wasn't a scribble. It was a careful, legible writing.

I was in the master's room. It wasn't a high house, but on the ground floor, a one story house. Next to me was a window. Outside the window, a kind of garden all covered over. All day the master would sit out there, because hundreds of people would come everyday above all to ask for medicine and also, many many people came particularly from that region, to have advice and counsel, and sometimes a person would come even to ask for teachings.

So all day he would be out there chatting with the people and I was inside writing. When I'd ask for a word "What was that?", I'd have to ask out the window to the master. And at that point the master would turn to me for a moment and dictate the next page. And then he would return to his conversation with the people. The next time I had finished writing I would once again say "I'm finished" and then he would give me the next piece.

He never once asked "Where had we got to?" or "What was the last line?" or anything of this kind. Only sometimes I couldn't remember the last of the dictated words and I would turn and ask him. The first times I was sure that if I'd look at it again, I'd see that the words and sentences didn't hang together grammatically. Because it wasn't up to me to construct the text. If I had to do that, then it would be my intellect entering the situation. It would no longer authentically be his text. My responsibility was only and solely to write down what he said.

So in the evening, when I'd go to bed, I'd re-read all 30

pages. And there was almost never even a single word missing. It was all precise and perfect. There were two or three times that there was lacking a verse or a line. I would ask him, and I would then realize that in fact he had said it before. But there was never anything to correct or put right. So this way I wrote a book thick like that.

So gongter, mind terma, are like that. It is in no way confusable with something intellectual, or composed or constructed. Now sometimes a practitioner can have a nyam of terma, above all when there's a nyam through prana, through body energy. It can seem that words, and also visions, come spontaneously. But these are called nyams, and if books emerge from them, they're called nyamyig ??, not terma.

If it's a nyam, let's say, and ten pages come, and somebody asks you later to repeat it, you can't. But if it's terma, it's exactly the same as if it were memory. If you ask the person ten different times to state it, ten different times he can state it with ease. So these two things must not be confused.

Then the other type of terma are material terma. There is material physical terma, either objects, or also there are books and texts. There are many many many extraordinary stories of the tertons in their chronicles and biographies. But these biographies, we can't say whether they're truthful or not. Because these biographies of course are written by human beings. And many times these biographies are transformed or embellished. Above all when disciples want to render honor to their master, one of them adds one word and another adds two words, and in the end it's all expanded.

When I was little, I heard that master Khentse Rinpoche was giving a Sakyapa teaching of the lamde (lam-'bras) and many many of his Sakyapa disciples told me that, when he gave the initiation of Hevajra, inside the temple there was a rain of gold. And some of them actually had little bits of gold that they showed me. It's an extraordinary story.

But I afterward went to Khentse Rinpoche, because I'm a disciple of his. Not Dingo Khentse, but Khentse Rinpoche who died in Sikkim, the real one. I received all the teachings of the Sakyapa, of the Lamde Lobshad (lam-'bras slob-bshad). When I got to him, to where Khentse Rinpoche was, then I really understood what this story about the rain of gold was actually about.

There was one of his disciples, called Maya Lama ??, a very rich man. He was a monk, not much of a practitioner nor of a scholar. But he was disciple of a certain Sakyapa master, and that master wanted to make the blocks for an edition of the Kanjur (bka'-'gyur) and Tanjur (bstan-'gyur). So he sent this man, Maya Lama, to China to collect funds from the faithful. And many rich Chinese faithful had given an awful lot of money towards the production of this blockprint edition.

And this Maya Lama became a very important personage. He was a big fat man very elegantly dressed. He came back with heaps of gold and silver and every kind of wealth. And they immediately made these blocks for the printing of the Kanjur and Tanjur which existed until very recently. And he had become an important personage as if he too were a well-known

master ... [tape gap] ... for such trips.

On this occasion when he came back from China, Khentse Rinpoche was giving this teaching of the Lamde Lobshad. When they're doing an initiation, the first thing that's done is the offering of the mandala, and they throw like grains of rice. That day of the offering of the mandala when the rice was being distributed, Maya Lama had put bits of gold in the rice. So from there many many people began to spread the tale that it had rained gold in the temple.

Before I went to Khentse Rinpoche, I had heard someone say that Khentse Rinpoche was building a great building. And one day Khentse Rinpoche had gone to visit and see how they were building the wall. And I was told that near the wall there was a big rock. And I was told that Khentse Rinpoche on this stone, this boulder, had just touched it with his finger, and had, with just the touch of his finger, carved OM AH HUM. This is often said to be a manifestation of a Mahasiddha, and it's often attributed to various masters. When I heard this, I was sure it was true. It seemed to me very very possible.

But when I got to Khentse Rinpoche, and I went to see this wall, this just wasn't the case. The whole story was a lie. In fact Khentse Rinpoche had gone there one day while they were building that wall, and someone had brought a big rock to put it into the wall, and as they were inserting this into the masonry of the wall, Khentse Rinpoche caught sight of something and said "Wait a minute. There's seems to be something written there." And it was true. When the mason looked, it was a rock on which someone had carved, sculpted, OM AH HUM.

So Khentse Rinpoche said "Don't put it backwards hiding the inscription. Turn it around so it's visible." And then he had taken a stick and cleaned the carving a bit because it had been covered with dirt. And he had them bring a bit of butter, and rubbed the butter into the words to make it shinier and more visible. This was the truth behind the story. So in the course of centuries and centuries, stories get transformed considerably. So you just can't always swallow entirely, and believe, what happens to be said.

On the other hand, there do exist extraordinary termas which are discovered. This same Abusudan told me of once when our master had discovered and brought forth from a rock a kind of drambu (??), a kind of precious egg, an oval. It was inside a huge stone. And the stone split open on its own. To split the stone, they'd been practicing there for ten days. And that split stone still contains the form of what it contained. Within it there's a cavity which had contained it. This is something that this Abusudan told me directly, and I surely believe him.

Then I personally saw a way in which terma is discovered, by my uncle who also was a person who discovers terma. This isn't a story or a piece of history. This is something that I was present and saw. One summer when I was at college, college hadn't yet finished for the year, but we had a few days of holiday, and my uncle sent for me and asked me to come. He lived on an ice mountain. And when I got there he was giving a teaching. I was there for few days to receive the teaching, and he told me secretly that he'd had an

indication of a terma through dream. But the dream indication wasn't perfectly complete. Thereafter a year later, I was once more with my uncle, and this time he told me that he had complete precise instructions about this terma. And these clear and precise indications he'd also written down. And it amounted to almost two pages of notes. The specific explanation, of where this ter could be found, how it was to be discovered, when it was to be discovered. Already before this he had discovered many many terma, but many of these ter he had discovered personally, that is, not publicly. But here the indication was that he had to discover it publicly.

So I said "Well we better try." And he was a bit anxious about this. He said "Well what if something happens and we don't discover anything? What will we do with the whole public there? Because everything is dependent after all on secondary causes. Something could intervene." I insisted. Because if there's a precise indication of how it must be discovered, then it must happen as it's indicated. He spoke only with me about the matter, with no one else. It's virtually as if he had been asking my advice.

But I got the word around. And I insisted and begged my uncle "Please let's go ahead and discover it." After that there wasn't much lapse of time. It was about two months away, the occasion. So we got everything prepared. And this rumour had already spread, and the whole matter had already become quite widely known, become a bit famous.

When the time came, we left for the right place. This place was rather near Dzogchen Monastery. But it was very far from where my uncle resided. We did about two days of travel on horseback. We arrived on a great plain, prepared our tents, and so forth. And people were coming, monks, lay people, people from all kinds of monasteries and communities, from all directions. This whole plain by the morning after was covered with tents.

So the next morning, following the indication, I led a group of young hardy men up to find the right location. There was, right up in front of us, a rather high mountain. And the place to be found was on the south face of this mountain. Even to get near it, to get onto this mountain, was very difficult, because it was a very savage, very difficult, mountain. It was almost impossible to get through, because there was a huge forest of thorns that you couldn't get past. And finally we could see on the south face a long huge rock. And after a day of effort, we finally managed to get to it.

The next morning we got up extremely early, and making a path for ourselves, we got actually to this rock. Now to find exactly the right place, the indication said that we had to wait for midday when the sun striking the rock would hit a certain place and form the Tibetan letter AH. So we went to an opposite place, in front of the mountain, to look and see that happen. So in fact we saw where the sun formed a precise and exact letter AH. And right there on the rock there was a cave.

So we set off once again climbing, headed for that place, and creating a path. There were at least thirty of us preparing this path, because we were close to the deadline. It was the next day that the discovery had to be made. So

there was no more time. And we worked hard until into the dark to make a road that was feasible for my uncle. My uncle was not a young man, nor was he very old, but he was very very fat. And he could hardly walk. And for him to walk a bit, he needed the help of at least two or three people. So for him to arrive up on a rock like that, was an incredible effort.

So the next day we started off very early. And all of the young men helped him as best they could, so we got up to that place by about 10:30 in the morning. And there arrived at that point, hundreds and hundreds of monks, of laypeople. The whole area was full of people. And then he began to conduct a rite, like a Guruyoga of Padmasambhava. And he asked the whole public assembled there to recite the mantra of Padmasambhava. He asked the monks who were there to recite an invocation of Padmasambhava. So the whole countryside seemed to be full of the sound of mantra and of invocation.

I was very worried. Because I was really responsible. I had instigated the whole thing. If I hadn't insisted, my uncle wouldn't have done the whole thing. I was thinking "Oh, who knows now what is going to happen?" And then at a certain moment, my uncle asked for a kind of pick, like an alpin pick.

Because we didn't know, none of us knew, where this ter would be found, how to discover it. Because in the indications, it did not say exactly where, the precise point where it was to be found. It simply had said "It's on the rock where the sun will beat in the form of an AH. And below that AH, there's a cave."

So we were waiting. What would my uncle do? So my uncle took this pick. It wasn't very large. He stood on his feet. He remained almost twenty minutes in concentration, and then at the very end he hurled the pick with all his force up toward the rock. And at a certain point the pick struck. And where it struck it left a white trace. And the pick fell back down. And my uncle said "Now, right there where the pick struck is where you dig."

Now there was no way to arrive there, because he couldn't get up there. It was way way up. And immediately about 20 young men dashed off to cut down a tall pine. And they cleaned it off. They notched it, and make a kind of ladder of it. Then there was a monk who was called Khasong Tsering (??). And my uncle called him. It was one of his close disciples. You go since your name is a fortunate one.

He was very nervous too. He climbed up on this wooden ladder. And he began to beat, to batter, at the rock. It didn't make the sound of a normal rock being beaten. The sound was somehow hollow and told us already there was something inside. So for about a quarter of an hour he was beating quite strongly there. And then suddenly he came upon very soft rock. And it was tumbling, like dust. So now beating went in a considerable depth, because there was no resistance. And now that these bits of white rock came tumbling down, I remember hundreds of people ran to capture pieces of it.

But I was still worried whether there'd be anything there or not. And then at a certain moment we saw him bring forth something extremely bright and shiny. And the sun struck it,

and it radiated with light. And he called down to my uncle "Now there's something here. Can I touch it or what should I do." My uncle said "Don't touch it. Wait. Wait."

And so he had many people hold taut a long piece of cotton, and with the pick he was beating with, he was hammering with, he had to knock it down to this cotton. And my uncle had already brought a vase of terracotta over which mantra had been said and which contained various mantras and preparations, to be substituted for what was taken out of the rock. And then they closed the hole up with mud. I later asked my uncle why this had been done, why they had made this substitution. And my uncle explained that sometimes when you take terma away, it has a harmful influence on the whole region. So you have to substitute something with a beneficent power.

And then when it was brought down, it began to be displayed to everybody. There was a drambu (??), that is, an egg-shaped oval object, about that size, and it was of almost turquoise color, and extremely luminous. And from the top down to the bottom, it was full of lines. It seemed as if you could virtually open it or unscrew it. And these lines were going in all directions. This was put inside a drawer or box. And that was the end of our terma discovery for the day.

And immediately we did a great ceremony of the Ganapuja. Then when we got down to where the tents were, we remained for three days. And all of the people of the area came to celebrate. There were two days of horse races. And one day there was a huge ceremony of sang (bsangs), purification by smoke. And it was presumed that inside this egg-shape, there were other things that had to be discovered at another time, and there might be some indications of further terma or there might be a text of some kind, or there might be some other kind of sacred object.

This is an example of terma discovery which I myself saw, and in which I myself participated. So you see, termas do truly exist. But very very often, they're confused with things that aren't real, are false. When we see a text concerning the teaching, if it's a text which genuinely communicates what it ought to communicate about the teaching, it always has a value.

But it isn't always the case that terma gives us something new which never existed before. Even if it's described and labelled as being extremely important, the most it can be is an explanation of some of the themes and arguments of the Tantra, for which reason it's always valid. For example there are termas which are mantra. Sometimes they're mantras which hadn't been known before, and which are now discovered. Whether that's a terma or not is a question of whether the mantra works or not. If it works then it means it has value.

There are many types of mantra which are truly kept hidden, above all those which we can call magic mantras, such as those which a Dzogchen master called Nubchen Sangay Yeshe (gnubs-chen sangs-rgyas ye-shes). This Nub Sangay Yeshe lived in the time of the evil king of Tibet, the king who banned and destroyed all of the teachings... [tape gap] ... learned the most potent of magic mantras.

He went to north India to a zone called Tuzhag ???. And armed with potent mantra, he returned to Tibet. His intention was to eliminate this evil king through mantra. But when he got back, he found that the king had already been dealt with by Lhalung Palgi Dorje (lha-lung dpal-gyi rdo-rje).

But then he had some problems. There was a rebellion, an insurrection in the countryside, and they killed his daughter and so forth. And he used some of these mantras. But then afterwards he said "They're just too strong, too much." Because they really could reek havoc and create negative powers. So these magic mantras he hid. He put them under the earth. And let's say that certain tertons every so often discovered little bits of this. And mantras like this have a very precise function. This is the principle, this is the basic distinguishing characteristic, if the terma or the terton have a precise characteristic and function or not.

But if things come to your mind spontaneously, it doesn't always mean that you've got gongter, mind terma. These things can easily come to you through nyams, above all through nyams having to do with prana, having to do with your vital energy, and also through certain articulations of form. If we're talking about a terma, it always has a beginning, middle, and end. It always has a total form. It's never as the Tibetans call it, like the little puppy lost in the fog.

Some people have said to me "If I become illuminated, if I realize myself, how will I know?" If somebody doesn't know how he's being illuminated or reaching enlightenment, he's like the little dog lost in the fog. Before you become illuminated or enlightened, you develop clarity. Illumination doesn't happen like an explosion. Illumination is linked to our condition. It means that obstacles diminish and clarity grows. The same is true with true terma. If you obtain true terma, it's very easy to know it.

So in the Dzogchen teachings, there exist many many of what we call the terma of the Nyingthig. What does Nyingthig mean? Nying means the heart. And we're not speaking of the physical heart, lungs, and so forth. But heart here means the core or center of it all.

And thig, what does that mean? Thig comes from the word thigle in Tibetan. Many people have seen in the word Nyingthig, something deriving from the word tilaka in Sanskrit. But many consider that Nyingthig is something like a drop, an essence drop, because there's a Tibetan word thigpa (thigs-pa) which means a drop. But the sense of Nyingthig is not a drop. It means the essential thigle, the core of the thigle. Because the thigle also refers to Dzogchen.

What is thigle actually? When we look towards the rays of the sun, in the middle of the rays of the sun, you may see like a sphere, a circle, with all five colors. This is a visible actual thigle. Thigle really means something which has no angles, no corners. It could be circular or it could be spherical round. This is how the nature of a dimension manifests, beyond any kind of limitations. If we speak of a force or an energy for example, the way it expands is precisely in that fashion, a circle that grows. And another name for the Dzogchen teaching is "the great thigle". The great thigle would also refer to our primordial state. So

when we speak of this essential thigle, it is the Upadesha teaching which communicates this.

So thig as in Nyingthig does not refer to merely a drop. And then when we refer to the Nyingthig, many people refer to that as a text, like the four Nyingthig Yazhi, or the Longchen Nyingthig of Jigmay Lingpa, or something of the kind. You hear many people say "Oh, I do the practice of the Nyingthig".

But the Nyingthig is not a school or a tradition. The Nyingthig is the general name of the Upadesha. When we speak of Dzogchen and divide it into three series, Semde, Longde and Upadesha, this Upadesha series is called the Nyingthig. Because it's considered like the most reserved part of the teachings of Vimalamitra and also of Padmasambhava. And so this is what is known as the Nyingthig.

So every tertön who discovers something that pertains to the Dzogchen teaching, it is called the Nyingthig. The Nyingthig Yazhi is in fact four such Nyingthig, a collection of four such Nyingthig, considered most important by Longchenpa. There are many, many other types such as those of Minling Terchen and Jongter (??), for example.

Very widespread, most recently in this tradition of Nyingthig, is the Longchen Nyingthig. The Longchen Nyingthig is a kind of gongter, or mind terma, of Jigmay Lingpa. Why? Because Jigmay Lingpa was an extraordinary master. He was a master not merely on the intellectual level, but he was a genuinely awakened one. And so he had a gongter particularly through his contact with Longchenpa. And so his teaching, the Longchen Nyingthig, is like a summary or condensation of those four Nyingthig. But of these condensations or summaries of the four Nyingthig and of the Upadesha teachings, there exists many, many.

The great success of Jigmay Lingpa's version is owed to his disciples. Because he had many, many extraordinary disciples like Dodrup Chen (rdo-grub chen). So through continuations of his disciples like Patrul (dpal-sprul) Rinpoche and others. So through these men, the Longchen Nyingthig of Jigmay Lingpa had a great success.

In eastern Tibet, there were many famous persons like Dodrup Chen, a great many masters of Dzogchen monasteries, Chayo Rigzin Chenpo (??) and masters of Adzomgar (a-dzom sgar). All of these as a matter of practice applied the Longchen Nyingthig. And every year during the lifetime of Adzom Drugpa (a-dzom 'brug-pa) at Adzomgar, was given the Longchen Nyingthig, what was called tye yak cho (??).

Also, the famous master of my master, famous because he left behind no body, Nyagla Padma Dudul had many of his personal teachings, but he always followed the practice of the Longchen Nyingthig. So if we look at these more recent great masters, almost all of them are followers of the Longchen Nyingthig.

So the Longchen Nyingthig has had much success. So in the western world when people speak of Dzogchen, very often they speak of the Longchen Nyingthig. Because if some master gives even minimally something having to do with Dzogchen, they must always use and follow the Longchen Nyingthig. But the Longchen Nyingthig of Jigmay Lingpa, all of that material which carries the title of the Longchen Nyingthig, is not all

Dzogchen. There's the Yungka Dechen Jamo (??) which is Anuyoga. There's much of Chuntrul (??) of Yondar Heruka patchen (??). There's a bit an integration of all of the traditions of the Nyingmapa school there.

And there's a famous text in the Longchen Nyingthig, the Ti Yeshe Lama (?? ye-shes bla-ma). This is like a summary of the Nyingthig Yazhi. And all of it based on the Tantra of Upadesha. That is, it's written by Jigmay Lingpa from his experience. It's not a terma. And this is characteristic of the way of teaching of Dzogchen Upadesha.

For example, most of you know, or know of, Dudjom (bdud-'joms) Rinpoche, the living one. He gives many teachings for example of Vajrakilaya from the terma of the prior Dudjom. And there's a type of Dzogchen practice which comes at the end of these Vajrakilaya teachings. This means Vajrakilaya utilized for practice a bit in the Anuyoga style. And at the end, when they speak of Dzogchen, they speak of it in the same way as the Upadesha. So there's a text written by Dudjom Rinpoche of this order and it's almost word for word the same as the Ti Yeshe Lama.

If we go to study the text of Terchen Jigmay Dorje (gter-chen 'jigs-med rdo-rje), Mindroling (smin-grol-gling), there's a series called the Ati Zabdon (Ati zab-don ??). Ati refers to Dzogchen which is sometimes called Atiyoga. There are many, many texts there which regard the practice of the Upadesha series of Dzogchen. Each text, if you begin to read and study them, seems more important than the others. But in truth, they're all of them based on the Tantra.

So it's very important that one learns a little from the root. And you mustn't lose sight of what is the root. And in this way it all can develop and expand. So we've said that for the Upadesha series of Dzogchen there exists principally seventeen Tantras.

But above all we've said that the fundamental text is the Drathaljur. If you proceed a little on the level of scholarly or intellectual study, the Drathaljur isn't very easy to understand on many points. So specific, more detailed explanations are given in the secondary Tantras, above all in what's called the Rigpa Rangshar (rig-pa rang-shar) which is a great Tantra. There, in the big Tantra, there are many explanations.

And then, a person mustn't be limited. One mustn't just become a specialist in the seventeen Tantras. One must live a bit in the dimension of knowledge of Dzogchen. Then you begin to find many explanations. For example, in the Drathaljur there are certain points that I never understood. Nor did I find explanations of these points in the other Tantras of the Upadesha.

But then, I went once and read a book, a Bonpo book. There's a Dzogchen, called a Dzogchen Yangtse Longchen (??) in the tradition of Bonpo. And I found a precise and detailed explanation of these points of the Upadesha of the Drathaljur. I found a precise explanation in another Bonpo text called the Thugje Nyima (thugs-rje nyi-ma ??). The Thugje Nyima is a terma text of a tertion who was called Guru Jo-tse (??), a tertion whose figure exists both in Bon and Buddhism. And it's a fantastic text but it's still a Bonpo text. If one feels

very, very Buddhistic, one can't succeed in reading it. If one doesn't have this limitation, it's a very useful book for understanding the Drathaljur. If one lives a bit in this way, one then also deepens what the intellect is capable of.

This was the explanation of terma. And now we're going to have a little interval, a little intermission. After the intermission, we're going to have a little explanation to give, and then we're going to do some practice. Because now we're about to have an eclipse of the sun.

On page 6 after the long life mantra of Padmasambhava, right there we're going to do the three mantras of long life which Rinpoche gave and which people have been copying. [mantra]. That's the long life mantra of Padmasambhava. [mantra]. That's Tsepamay (tse-dpag-med) or Amitayaus. [mantra]. That's Nonchelma (??). [mantra]. That was white Tara. [mantra]. That's Guru Dragpo.

[Tuesday morning, 20-Jul-82]

Somebody asked me to give a little more clarification about the base. And I'll repeat a bit about this. The base is something very, very important in Dzogchen teaching and must be well understood. When we speak of the Dzogchen teaching we always summarize it with zhi, lam, and daybu (gzhi, lam, 'bras-bu), that is the base, the path, and the fruit. These terms are also employed in Tantrism. But for that matter, these terms are also important at the Sutric level of Buddhism. So this is not something special to Dzogchen. It's a way of understanding clearly the outcome or conclusion of the teaching.

For example in the Mahayana Sutras, we speak of the base as the two truths, the relative truth and the absolute truth. And if the base is the union of those two truths, the path is the union of two accumulations, the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom. And the fruit is understood as the union of the two bodies, the body of form and the Dharmakaya, which is without form.

We're used to hearing three bodies spoken of. But in that case, there is a reference to two bodies because Nirmanakaya and Sambhogakaya are put together as the body of form. There's an invocation which is written by Nagarjuna which comes at the very end of a text of Madhyamika philosophy. And there he speaks of accumulating both merit and wisdom and he says that through that accumulation, one obtains two sacred bodies. So in the Sutras too, there's this understanding of zhi, lam, and daybu, the base, way or path, and the fruit.

In the Dzogchen teaching, above all that which we call the base becomes important as a principle of understanding. Because the base itself is explained as the primordial state of the individual. But this is not a concept common to all of the different traditions of the teaching. This is not universally understood this way. As we've said already, in the Sutras the base is understood as the union of two truths, relative and absolute truths. It's not understood as the primordial condition of the individual. But there, there's a concept that's essentially similar, dezhin nyingpo (de-bzhin snying-po) it's called, the nature of the Tathagata.

This nature of the Tathagata means that there is the possibility, the cause, for the potential realization in the individual. On this point there are many, many polemics and debates. There are many currents and tendencies of thought which argue that there are beings who don't have this essential nature, don't have this possibility. In Tibetan, they say rigchad (rigs-chad), that is, that there are beings who have no possibility of realization.

But by the time we get to the level of the Mahayana Sutras, almost all views hold that all beings have this potential and simply awake their causes. Here, then, there is a similarity to the consideration in the Dzogchen teaching of the base. But you mustn't confuse it again, because at those levels, not in Dzogchen, they do not state that this base is self-perfected. Their position is simply that there is, or in other views there is not, the possibility of realization. This means that at the Sutric level, this point, the existence

of this potential, remains a bit in discussion.

When we find the teaching above this, the more elevated kind which perceives, yes, the individual does have that capacity for realization, these constitute the teachings that we call the minor or external Tantras. These are Kriyatantra, Upayatantra, Yogatantra for example. These all base their method, that is their path, on the principle of purification. But if their method is purification, that implies that something of the individual, something that the individual contains, requires purification. Therefore, although there's something which, if purified, will suffice, it still is not a question of it being already self-perfected.

But here at the level of the minor Tantras, there is no longer any doubt that the individual possesses the capacity, the potential, for realization. Here it's understood that all beings have this possibility. But it's only through preparation for receiving wisdom that one can approach realization. Thus it's almost as if realization had to be constructed or added onto what is already there. This means, clearly, that the base is not yet known at this level as self-perfected, as already perfect.

Now we get to the next level up, more elevated, which is that of the higher Tantras, that of the Anuttaratantras. And in the Anuttaratantra, there are two ways of seeing. In general, the general view of the Anuttaratantra is that the individual possesses, already possesses, the capacity for total realization. But the individual has to be trained and developed in order to manifest the Sambhogakaya level in the Bardo state. And this requires a process of perfecting through the practices of kyerim and dzogrim.

So it's as if the individual, there's a situation of not yet being perfected, for which reason this final state, once the perfecting has happened, is called Mahamudra, mudra meaning symbol and Mahamudra meaning the great symbol which all will manifest, in which totality will manifest, at that level. But here it's understood that the individual is perfected through the kyerim and dzogrim which bring him to that state. So here there's no statement that before receiving any initiation, before undergoing the process of kyerim and dzogrim, the individual is already totally perfected. No such statement is made at that level of Tantra. And that's the position characteristic of the system of the Anuttaratantra.

Now we've already said within the general field of Anuttaratantra, there's a more specific area in the Nyingmapa school called Anuyoga. We've mentioned that for the Anuyoga, it's not necessary to go through the elaboration of gradual visualization. And the reason is that that tradition has known, from the very beginning, that the individual is self-perfected. But they've recognized that in order for that self-perfectedness to manifest, the method to be used must be the path of transformation. And so, just as in the rest of Tantrism, just as in the rest of the higher Tantra, the method used for that transformation is kyerim and dzogrim. And at that point, thanks to that, one manifests that which one already is.

Here we're talking about being within time and within the

limitations of the situation. So this implies that there is the moment or situation of transmigration. There is the moment or situation of beyond transmigration. But whether it happens to be in use or not, the mirror remains the mirror, that is, the zhi is always the same.

But here one has to understand a distinction that's made in Tibetan between shizhi (gshis gzhi) and zhi. Zhi means the base, the basis. And shizhi means the basis of everything. When we say shizhi, we mean a general condition. That means the same thing as the term Dharmadhatu in Sanskrit. Dharma refers to everything which exists, all of existence. And dhatu is the condition of that. So this is the same as what we call shizhi. And by that it's simply meant the condition, the field of things. This shizhi, condition or situation, the field in which all happens, is the same for all beings.

But if we know and consider the condition of shizhi, or if we say that an individual when he's in a state of meditation finds himself in the shizhi, this is very similar to what the Brahmins in Hindu thought speak of as being one with Brahma, that is, that everything returns into, that is, integrated into, or unified, with the condition of Brahma, as if the individual no longer had an existence. Because it's considered that the individual exists only in the situation in which one finds oneself in time, within limitation, and here instead there's a kind of union with all. If the limitation and time boundedness of the individual is liquidated, then they consider that one is in the condition of the totality, the total field of events. And they say that's a unification.

That understanding of the base, the base of everything, total field, is called shizhi. It's essentially the same as the total space, the total condition or field of space. When we talk about the openness of space or space itself, that embraces everything, including everything material. When a material object disappears, what is happening is that it's disintegrating, or integrating into, the total space.

But when we talk about zhi, we're talking about something quite else. We're talking about the state of the individual as such. That zhi, that condition of the individual, is understood in terms of essence, nature, and energy. That's not a general condition, a total field of all phenomenon. But it's an explanation of a specific condition. We could say that in space, we find the sun. When we say the sun, we're no longer talking about the totality of space. Yet the sun finds itself in the totality of space. But the sun has its own functioning, it's own particular way of working and being.

So the individual, what we define in terms of the three primordial wisdoms, is understood and explained in terms of these characteristics as individual. At the beginning, at origin or base, during, while on the path, and in realization, the individual continues to exist as individual. It doesn't disappear or get blurred into the all.

And the explanation of the three primordial wisdoms, essence, nature, and energy, is not a discussion of three different things. Because if a person is to understand the meaning of something, you have to proceed with some kind of idea or definition thereof. At this point you have to decide "Something exists or doesn't exist". When you go to look,

there's nothing there. And yet, even if there's nothing there, it continues to keep happening. It continues to keep being present. We're not talking about two different things, something that doesn't exist and something that continues to happen and present itself. We're obviously talking of one phenomenon. Then this very same continuing to happen, has its way of happening, has its how and the mode in which it occurs.

When we speak of someone who's a realized being, it doesn't mean he's disappeared, disintegrated, into nothingness. When a being is totally realized, it possesses infinite wisdom. And he continues to function, to work, and to happen. So we speak of these three considerations as essence, nature and energy.

Now, in the base there is something indispensable to understand. This base is indispensable to understand because if in the Dzogchen teaching you don't understand the base, then this much spoken of direct introduction can't occur. If someone says there isn't anything, one could have an idea of void. There might be two ways to procure an idea of this. One might be that an idea of void, that from the very beginning, nothing has existed. Or it might be the idea that relatively speaking, something presents itself yet it has no substance as they explain in Buddhist philosophy.

They say there's one kind of void or nothingness that's like the horns of a rabbit, a hare. Since a hare or rabbit has never ever had horns, at least as far as we know, hares, rabbits don't have horns. If I say, the horns of the rabbit are illusory, are non-existent, it doesn't mean very much since they don't exist. There's nothing of which I'm denying the existence. We only can sort of work out an idea of what I'm talking about because we know that the cow does have horns. So in imagination, in our idea, we take the horns off the cow and put them on the rabbit. It's a completely useless illusory labor. That's one kind of void.

Quite another kind of void, when we say "the horns of the cow don't exist". We know the horns of the cow perfectly well. For us, the horns of the cow are something concrete. It is the case. When I negate something that does for us concretely appear to be the case, this is quite another consideration. We call it nangtong (snang stong), that is, I justify or demonstrate that which we see, that which presents itself, is not something concrete. And, this is the consideration that takes us to shunyata.

However, this is a very complex set of considerations, complex because there's a lot of argument about this between Gelugpas and Sakyapas and so forth. At bottom, we're not very much interested by all that. What interests us is that when we say something is not, that there's nothing there, we mean, that on examination, on investigation, there's nothing that can be affirmed about it.

For example, I find I have an idea. An idea arises. If I search for that idea, I search for where it comes from, where it came from, where it now is located, and where it disappears to. What I'll always find as an answer to each of those questions, is nothing. There's nothing there, nothing you can get ahold of. It's often said in the teaching that finding nothing at all is the best thing to find. Because

that means one has entered a bit into knowledge of shunyata, of void. And this is characteristic of the base, of what we call the essence.

But then, when we find nothing there, that doesn't suffice for void. It's not that there's nothing at all, because something keeps continuing and happening. And this happening of continuity is what we call Tantra for example. It never stops.

There exists in the tradition of the Hevajra Tantra in Sakyapa school a concept which they utilize which they call kunzhi gyugyud (kun-gzhi rgyu-rgyud). Kunzhi means more or less the base. There's another use of the term kunzhi when they make analysis of the mind, but that's a completely other usage. Gyu means cause, and gyud means the continuation. So here we speak of the continuation of the cause of kunzhi.

Why do they speak of the cause? As I've already said, in the Anuttarat Tantra in general, there is not knowledge of the self-perfectedness from the very beginning, the already perfectedness of the base. So they speak of the cause. The cause means something that will produce effect. This concept kunzhi gyugyud is parallel to the base, the zhi in Dzogchen. But if some Tibetologist reads the books, he might find very entertaining some of the recent Sakyapa texts. Some more recent Sakyapa masters negate the existence of this kunzhi gyugyud. They say that this is contradicted by the tradition of Tantrism that's more closely linked to Sutra.

In short, there are lots and lots of philosophical arguments over these points. But at any rate, what it means is "that which continues", which is the same as the principle underlying Tantra. And in Dzogchen, this fact that what continues, that it continues happening, is called the nature. And this nature is also called clarity.

Then lastly we have energy. Sometimes this word energy is also understood as embracing the notion of compassion. Compassion is understood also as a presence, the presence, the presence of the working, of the activity, of the mind. But in the Dzogchen teaching, compassion is understood as part of energy, as part of the capacity of mind. This too, compassion, is understood not as something that has to be cultivated or constructed, but as something already perfected, already totally perfect in the individual.

And you recall that it's explained that energy has as its ways of manifesting, energy manifests in three modes, that is, as tsal, dang, and rolpa. We've given as an example of tsal, or an illustration of tsal, how a crystal struck by light produces colored lights, dancing rainbows, in the outer environment. This crystal which is pure and limpid, represents in this illustration our state. But its energy is manifesting as it were, as external rays of light.

And it's in this way that our energy manifests as all of our vision, all that which presents itself, whether it be pure or impure vision. Impure vision is that which we call karmic vision. And we spoke of how this karmic vision becomes denser, hardens into a kind of ice. When vision, that which presents itself is less hardened, less dense, freer, then it's a vision of the essence of the elements, we call that pure vision, paradise.

There's another way in which energy manifests which we call rolpa. And here we use the analogy, for our state, of the mirror. And what's manifesting, the reflections are manifesting here in the mirror itself, not outside it. All of the reflections, all that which is manifesting, is manifesting at the same level as the mirror. And this is the same as the energy with which we do all of our transformations and visualizations. This is the same as all that which will manifest, all the energy which will manifest, in what's called the bardo of existence, the bardo of Dharmata, all that which will manifest in the bardo of the Dharmata as sound, as rays, as light.

Then there's still another way in which energy manifests and this is called dang. And this is principally understood as energy manifesting for example, through sound, sound, vibration and the like, one can feel. And thus, this is the explanation given for how energy functions, the ways in which it works.

And we understand this functioning of energy to understand better the self-perfectedness of the individual. This, in the Dzogchen teaching, is the first thing that we explain, the base.

And when this base is put to use, is applied and put to action, that we call the path. And the characteristics of essence, nature, and energy become what we call the three bodies of the path. So we speak very often when describing the path of the state of calm of mind, naypa (gnas-pa), the state of movement of mind, migyowa (mi-g.yo-ba), and the presence or noticing of them both which is present in both cases which is rigpa. And these each have also their characteristic nyams in practice. There's the nyams of void, the nyam of clarity, and the nyam of sensation. And all three are linked to the corresponding three primordial wisdoms of the base.

So just as those are linked to the essence, nature, and energy, so at the level of fruit or realization, we have another expression which is Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya. Here, too, nothing has been changed. It's simply that what is, is manifesting. In this case, we spoke a great deal about the energy at base and here it's spoken of as the wisdom of quantity and quality of the individual that is manifesting. And these are the principal considerations, let us say, of a summary of the base in Dzogchen.

And when Garab Dorje says direct introduction, what's meant above all is to make this base understood, clearly understood. But this is not simply a matter of making an analysis, explaining categories and characteristics and the other person kind of gets the idea. This is an oral explanation. This is an oral explanation of the base so that one simply has an idea. But there's nothing that's been confirmed. There's nothing to confirm or that, on the other hand, can be hidden about this base. But the introduction becomes real, becomes authentic, when one enters into experience of this base. Then you find yourself in this state and you become familiar with it experientially. And, this very state which one experiences and gets to know, that is base.

So you mustn't confuse this and reduce it to what emerges through much explanation, which is after all only a concept. Otherwise, Dzogchen becomes a mere philosophy. When Dzogchen becomes a philosophy, it's no longer a living teaching and it's no longer a teaching that can be lived. Dzogchen is something alive. And this is why we're always doing something cooperatively, together. It's better therefore to do practice. When it's most useful, there's explanation. We're always trying to collaborate and cooperate to achieve understanding using whatever means are best just then.

So that's why I keep saying "It mustn't become a philosophy. It mustn't become a book." Above all because an analysis is almost always a very powerful means of conditioning the individual. Sometimes an explanation is given and it seems so logical, so beautiful. People say "Wow, that's beautiful." And they haven't understood a thing. If that's what's happening, we're very, very far from Dzogchen.

So we'll do a little practice, not just talk. What practice do you prefer? I've explained so many. These practices, detong, saltong and so forth, are not practices which lend themselves very much to collective doing. You can do it, but because people's timing is different, people's phrasing is different, it's difficult to lead it collectively.

We could do for example the practice of the voice and that of the body which we haven't done very much of. In regard to the practice of the voice, I have a few more things to say and perhaps there was some confusion about the names of the different practices. The name of the second of those voice practices, that's the practices with the HUM, is tsaljong. I may have said sorjug before. Sorjug is another type of practice. And the third of those HUM practices is called nyamtsal (gnyam-rtsal), nyamtsal meaning how to find harmony. And these two one has to remember.

And when you do the second of those practices for example, you can also make that sound rather sharp, above all when there's some kind of thought or some vision that blocks you. And these are all practices you can do either with your eyes shut or with your eyes open. But it's not very easy with your eyes open at the beginning. Because any type of practice where you have to do visualization, where you have to do something in your mind, then when you open your eyes and everything's there, you find it rather difficult. Above all, the third of those voice practices, what's called nyamtsal, where from the core HUM, or the heart, goes a chain of HUMs, this is especially difficult if you've got your eyes very much open. There are ways of training that.

For example, you put an object out there, actually place an object there to fix your gaze upon. Certainly you don't do it far away or very high. But you can put an object at something like that and below you. And so when I'm seated so, I find it a bit below my eye level. And I can train myself a bit initially with the eyes half shut. And then slowly open myself to actually seeing this object there. In this way, this visualization, this chain of HUMs, can address itself toward that object, where I'm gazing. Now, we've given some specifications, some details. More generally, it's just like I've already explained.

[Tuesday afternoon, 20-Jul-82]

All right, the practice of the HUM. Let's do three times each one or five times. Do you remember? OK, super brief, telegraphic.

First, you visualize the HUM at the center of the body. Even if it takes the time of several in and out breaths, you visualize it clearly and well. It's blue. The HUM isn't facing you. You're presenting the HUM. With your sounding the HUM, from this principal HUM emerge secondary HUMs. These HUMs fill all of our vision. They touch some object. That object manifests as a HUM. So everything becoming HUMs, the maximum number possible of HUMs.

Then when you breathe in, when you inhale, all the HUMs come back inside you. Then they expand out again. And you repeat this in and out many times. This is called gyaydab (rgyas-gdab). It's almost to authenticate, to validate, all things.

The second one is tsaljong. In this case, from the central HUM come many HUMs. As you sound the HUM, you can sound it a bit more sharply than you did before. And it eliminates all material objects. It eliminates the entire dualistic vision to the maximum extent possible. Then inhaling again, the HUMs come back, and they eliminate the entire material body. Keep repeating this. We'll repeat each of these things five times.

Then the third one is one called nyamtsal, that is, harmony. I can have the eyes either shut or open slightly. From the central HUM comes a chain of HUMs. And then I fix my gaze and attention on the point reached by the last of these HUMs, by the end of the chain. Then when I inhale again, I bring the whole chain back in. This is called nyamtsal and I can repeat it again and again. And this has a very important principle of mastering and coordinating the prana.

Then there's the fourth. And we've said that there's two possible ways of doing this. In some traditions, from the central HUM emerges another HUM, but as my central HUM, I remain here. I stay here. But my consciousness, my ideas, are linked with this secondary travelling HUM. Sounding the HUM, I travel, I go wherever. One initially does best to travel to some place one knows. Because it's easier at first to have an idea of that. Later on, further trained, you can travel anywhere, wherever you like. And then with the in breath you come back.

Or there exists the other way. This time it's the central HUM itself which travels, and that means the HUM which is integrated with me, the HUM with which I am one. I sound the HUM and as I do so, I and the HUM as one, travel wherever I wish. In that case, you don't have to come back with the in breath. You can travel tranquilly wherever you want to go until you're tired of travelling and then at the very end it's the state of nalwa as usual. Nalwa means to find yourself in this state of natural relaxation. That's always the goal or arrival point of rushan. And this we're also going to do with the five HUMs. So as a matter of counting, of practical, we're going to sound twenty HUMs now. Remember that we do first of all the breathing.

[Wednesday morning, 21-Jul-82]

This morning we'll talk a bit about transmission. Because up to now everything we've talked about has been about the rushan, that is, the preparation for contemplation. And many of you may have imagined that rushan is contemplation, but that's not the case. You have to understand, in this regard in order to proceed, something more about transmission and what it consists of. Transmission is one of the fundamental considerations and it's essentially to this that the first statement of Garab Dorje, direct introduction, refers. And there are various ways in which transmission takes place.

In general we spoke about three types of transmission. We say direct transmission, symbolic transmission, oral transmission. And the way of working with these transmissions is seen in three major traditions. For example, one of the most widespread would be Tantrism. When we speak of Tantrism we say that without an initiation there can be no result, as if a field where seeds have never been planted naturally could grow nothing.

So everything is considered based on or hinged on initiation. As a result, in the Tantric system, there are hundreds and hundreds of different initiations. But then when one speaks of these initiations, primarily one is meaning a method that works through symbolic transmission. Because the path of Tantrism is primarily the way of transformation.

And in transformation one has to have an idea of what one transforms into. And this requires something like the presence of an image of the mandala. If the individual is to manifest himself transformed, in what way?, as what type of divinity? All of this is very closely linked to visual symbols and also to symbolic objects. So here there's a whole prescribed behavior linked to the body which enacts the ritual ceremonial activity.

And by initiation in Tantrism, we mean some kind of ritual or ceremony. It's also said that the doors, or the gates, of Tantrism are opened by initiation. If the person hasn't understood anything through the initiation, then an explanation is given and perhaps they grasp something afterward. This is one type of widely used initiation. And they speak of this as a method that employs empowerment. And all this is part of what is regarded in the Dzogchen teaching as symbolic transmission. And this is a type of transmission characteristic of transmission that has to do with the Sambhogakaya level.

Then there are other ways in which transmission is conducted. There's oral transmission. Oral transmission means that somebody explains what we're concerned with in a way that enables us to understand. And this is a way of teaching which a bit resembles that of the Sutric level of Buddhism. Certainly a master who's teaching at the level of the Sutras, doesn't perform symbolic initiation of the type that you have in Tantrism.

But if one has reached a knowledge, a grasp, of shunyata, one must have gotten there through an oral explanation and teaching. This is called in Tibetan pandita khapay lug (pan-di-ta mkhas-pa'i lugs ??). Pandita has to do with a

scholarly way, and khapa lug with introduction or path, so this is understood as a way of those who study, of scholars. Because also in the Dzogchen teaching one can have an introduction through intellect. If we have to do with a studious person very knowledgeable about Tantra, about Sutra and the like, through many, many oral explanations, he might grasp the idea. So this too is a way of introducing.

And then oral explanation is also a way of bringing the individual into a knowledge of practice, of conveying to him what practice is about, as in the Dzogchen Semde series of teachings. From fixation all the way to contemplation, the individual is moved forward by successive explanations in that teaching. And this among the three kinds of transmission is what's called oral transmission.

Then we have another type of transmission which is called direct transmission. In Tibetan this is called togdan nyam ?? (rtogs-ldan-nyams ??). Togdan means someone who possesses the knowledge that is being transmitted. Nyam means that one has an experience. Tray (??) means to bring you to that knowledge. This is a way of teaching and transmitting which, as I have said, was conveyed to me by my master Changchub Dorje.

For this, it's not necessary for example, to be particularly intellectual. Nor is it particularly necessary to go by way of ceremony or ritual. But principally what's involved is getting you into the experience of knowledge. And this is what we primarily call direct introduction. Direct transmission is carried out without much reference to external things. And the characteristic of this type of transmission is the direct communication of knowledge. Certainly, if one is capable of working with, and profitting from, direct transmission, that's fundamental.

But to know how to have it, how to benefit from it, one must also have a certain amount of experience. If one must go through something like oral transmission, at times one succeeds in following an oral transmission and understanding it without having had the experience. This is why many teachers use specific texts and follow literally these texts. If we follow a specific text and repeat word for word what it contains, this is obviously a way of performing an intellectual communication. That is to say, it's considered that whoever wrote the text actually understood something in a very clear and precise way and has conveyed it in writing.

So if I as a teacher don't have the experience, but I have studied carefully this text and know it word for word, then I proceed with it. That way, I'm not responsible for what's being communicated. If the author hasn't made any error, well then the hearer or receiver should get something from it.

The symbolic transmission also can be considered as semi-intellectual communication. One hasn't totally had the appropriate experience. But one has studied something and one has at least an experience of visualization. So one is communicating symbols and forms, and it's exactly as if one were following a text. This is characteristic in general of how Tantrism is conveyed.

But in the Dzogchen teaching it is true that, by and

large, the Dzogchen masters convey by direct transmission. A disciple goes to a master. It by no means says that the master must give him an explanation based on following a particular text, or a communication through symbolic or ritual transmission. Nowadays when it is said to be giving Dzogchen teachings, it's true that many give ritual and formal initiations. Because many terms and many teachers have enlarged or embroidered the communication in the style of Tantrism.

In Tantrism, elaborate formal and public initiations of the kind that the Dalai Lama gives, of the kind that Karmapa gave, or Kalu Rinpoche has given, are considered the appropriate way to diffuse and spread Tantrism. They know perfectly well that that's not true initiation. Because initiation means that one must enter into knowledge. But in that type of public event, one can create a cause in the existence of people. One can also develop a relationship of some kind. And in this way they spread the teaching of Tantrism.

There's a text written by the great master Sangay Yeshe (sangs-rgyas ye-shes). It's called the Samtan Layjun (bsam-gtan ??). For those who know how to read a bit of Tibetan, read the second chapter, in which it's explained how the teaching is spread or broadcast, how the teaching is to be spread from the point of view of the Sutras; those who follow Tantrism, with what means they spread the teachings. In this case you can perfectly well understand why these formal initiations are also given.

But in the Dzogchen teaching, true initiation is considered direct introduction to experience. But true initiation is not necessarily confined to one of these three modes. It can combine, and be simultaneously, oral, symbolic and direct transmissions. When we study a bit the history of the Dzogchen teaching, it's said that teaching at the Nirmanakaya level as was performed by the historical Buddha Shakyamuni, this is called Sutra. Teaching at the Sambhogakaya level as was given by Vajrapani, by Vajrasattva, through manifestation, this is called Tantra. And that teaching given from the state of the Dharmakaya is teaching of self-liberation, like the teaching of Dzogchen.

In this way, historically, we have a link with what is called the direct transmission from the Dharmakaya, the symbolic transmission from the Sambhogakaya, and the oral transmission from the Nirmanakaya. But this is more or less an intellectual explanation to give you an idea, a notion. This is above all to make happy those people who really enjoy making analyses of things.

But in reality there's no such thing as one of these transmissions. Because at bottom you have to remember the underlying state of the individual, what we've spoken of as the three primordial wisdoms. Knowledge is necessarily linked with these three. So you can never have one of these transmissions alone. But one can consider that there are different ways of transmitting which emphasize one or another of these. That certainly.

An individual comes to me for example, and says "Will you teach me a little of the Dzogchen teaching?" You can be sure

that I'm not going to ask him "What initiations have you had?", or raise the question of whether I can or cannot give him teachings. This means that the teaching of Dzogchen itself is transmission. It's not necessary that he have transmission as if that were his credential or passport to then receive the teaching.

But if we understand things rather from the point of view of Tantrism, if somebody says "Would you teach me Mahamudra?", and if I were to reply "Sure, come over and I'll give it to you," that would be completely mistaken. Because you must understand, and that person must understand, how you arrive at the state of Mahamudra. You arrive at Mahamudra through transformation, and for transformation there exists specific means and specific itinerary. I have to follow a specific method, like that of Korlo Dechog (khor-lo bde-mchog) or Dorjepamo or whatever, to get there.

The method was at the very beginning a transformation which was then transmitted. I have to follow a transformation which is manifested. I can't just invent something. If I'm to enter into that path of transformation and enter into that transformation, I must first receive it through initiation. So if someone asks me to teach him Mahamudra, I'm very correct in asking him first of all "What initiations have you had?" And I have to understand his capacity in what he's done in kyerim and of dzogrim.

So the principle behind these ways of transmitting is not the same. It's quite different. Why is it that there are many today, people who are giving, said to be giving, Dzogchen teaching through formal initiation? Because many of these are in a tradition that comes above all from Padmasambhava, or at least it's so considered for all that which comes out of the traditions of the terma. Because Padmasambhava was one of the great patrons and masters of all of Tantrism. And so he much used, and in that tradition there's much use of, Dzogchen teaching combined with Tantrism.

But if we actually know Tantrism and its origins and the principles of the Anuttaratantra, it ought to be a bit different from how they're doing it. In fact, even Tantrically, the way of practicing, the way of giving initiation, shouldn't be so complicated as they're doing today. Here it's because all of what they're doing today, for example the way they conduct Kalachakra initiation and the like, is very much in the style, and within the system, not of Anuttaratantra, but of Yogatantra. Because this is a characteristic viewpoint, or way of doing things, of Tibetan Buddhism.

The Tibetan Buddhists wanted to convey and spread Tantrism, but through Sutra. There are particularly schools like the Sakyapas and the Gelugpas, when they explain Tantrism, they do so entirely within the framework of Sutra. And there was a precise motivation, historical motivation, for that. Because something like Yogatantra is a form of Tantrism that's very presentable and appealing. And Anuttaratantra, by comparison with something like Yogatantra, seems messy.

For example, if we have to make an offering, the system of Yogatantra makes the offering in a way that's very pleasing to us, to people. It's very courteous. It's very refined.

It's based on everything that we find delightful, pleasant perfumes, beautiful flowers. The foods that are offered are sweets that appeal to our palate. It's very appealing. And there are charming ornaments. And it's all silk and very pleasing to our conventional aesthetic sense.

Why is this? Because it's based on the consideration of a divinity outside of ourselves, a totally realized being like Avalokiteshvara, and I'm asking this god or divinity to give me wisdom that I need. I prepare myself for the possibility of receiving this wisdom from this external source. So receiving this wisdom, I develop my knowledge until eventually at the end I may approach unification with this source of realization. At the very end I can grasp the oneness of that. But until I achieve realization I have to behave very well, very courteously, also in front of the divinities.

But in the Anuttaratantra, the divinities don't function on this principle. Here the divinities in the Anuttaratantra, the divinities manifested as an example. And I'm to follow that example. This is a method for transformation, and teaches how one can transform oneself. Here there's no notion that there's a divinity outside of me before whom I find myself, whom I ask to help me. Rather, I'm transforming myself into the divinity. Here divinity, mandala, all this become a means that I make use of and integrate with.

So in all the different versions and levels of the Anuttaratantra, there are many, many forms of divinity. Their way of being, and therefore all of the offerings that I might make to them, represent the opposite of our attachment, our habits, our notions of what's pleasing. For example, we like a pleasant perfume, a pleasant odor. And this pleasing odor or perfume is an attachment of ours. So in principle, in terms of the underlying state, the pleasure of perfume or the disagreeable odor is all one and the same. And in order to arrive at this understanding of the oneness, the sameness, of the pleasant and the unpleasant, rather than offer a perfume, we offer something that's exactly the contrary.

And so for example, instead of making an offering in a jewelled bowl, we might offer something in a kapala, a skull cup. Instead of putting sweets and candies and pleasing bonbons, we might put meat, and bone and blood. Instead of ornaments of jewels, you have ornaments of skulls. Here, all of this derives from the principle of overcoming attachment and breaking habit.

The principle is very different from that of the Yogatantra. And this was a pretty rough thing to introduce in the face of the habits of the people in Tibet. Therefore during the reign of King Trisong Detsan (khri-srong lde'u-btsan), he who invited Padmasambhava into Tibet, he constructed many temples at Samye (bsam-yas), but each of these temples is named one by one for different Tantras of the Yogatantra. Not one for the Anuttaratantra.

In fact, the Anuttaratantra is virtually forbidden publicly. It's not that it was unknown, or that the king didn't practice it. In fact, the king was himself one of the major practitioners of Anuttaratantra. But much of the behavior and style of the, much of the appearance of the Anuttaratantra is pretty uncomfortable, pretty disquieting for people who are

not accustomed to it, particularly when we're talking in a context of a teaching like Buddhism in general. It just didn't correspond to the common view.

So Anuttaratantra remained hidden and what was publicly presented was Yogatantra. So, Tibetan masters slowly, slowly over centuries, dressed up Anuttaratantra ever more in the garments of Yogatantra. There's no harm here. You can practice perfectly well with this method. But at times people lose sight of the distinction. They completely fail to distinguish between Yogatantra and Anuttaratantra.

For example, the statue of Hevajra at the beginning existed solely to give you an idea, an image for the eventual visualization and transformation. But a statue of Avalokiteshvara exists also, can also exist to be honored, for offerings to be made to it, to pray before. Because the two ways of seeing are completely different. But today if you go inside a temple you find all the statues of the Anuttaratantra with honor being paid to them and offerings being made before them exactly in the style of Yogatantra. So many people don't have clear ideas in this regard, don't understand the distinction.

Tantrism, what's spoken of as formal transmission, is very important and by now the masters have carried even the Dzogchen teaching and Dzogchen system a bit into that zone. So today they even speak a great deal about initiations of Dzogchen which are carried out with lots of ceremony. But the truth is that you'll never find any historical basis for Garab Dorje ever having done an initiation with vase, tormas (gtor-ma), and the like. And the truth is the same for his disciples, for Shrisingha, Jnanasutra. None of them performed such initiations. So that's not the principle.

And then there's a very clear explanation given in this regard by much more recent and very famous master, Jigmay Lingpa. Jigmay Lingpa says that whatever initiation of a formal kind with vase, etc., that's given, if one hasn't entered genuinely into knowledge, into lived knowledge of the primordial state of the individual, then one has not received any initiation. Consider that you've gone through some kind of symbolic initiation. But that's not what he means by initiation. True initiation is the moment of entering into knowledge. And that doesn't depend on things, on objects, on ceremony.

And then he also quotes some words, some statements, some text to further explain this, noting that Samantabhadra never had a formal initiation from anybody. This which Jigmay Lingpa says, is extremely accurate. Because in the Dzogchen teaching, initiation is not understood as something that has to be done in a ceremonial form. You begin with the explanation of the base. All verbal explanation is initiation when one enters into knowledge and develops one's knowledge of one's condition.

There's no point considering initiation as something mysterious. Because many people live in some kind of mysterious condition which is in fact fantasy. If something strange is done with the door shut and very few people allowed inside, and if some words are said that none of the people present understand, and two or three strange objects are

shown, or put on some strange garments and give off some odd vibrations, people feel they've really done something unusual. It's afterward that you have to notice whether anything is really changed or not. Usually there's a lot of vibration and then once you get out the door, nothing whatsoever has happened. This isn't what's called initiation in Dzogchen.

Initiation means you open yourself and you discover what your real situation is. And also it means that your knowledge of the primordial state doesn't just remain some kind of concept or notion. The real initiation, the authentic initiation, of the true and original Dzogchen as it's found in all of the Tantras is what's called yedrol thamchad wang (ye-grol thams-cad dbang). Yedrol means self-liberation. And thamchad means total. Wang means empowerment. So, empowerment of total self-liberation. This is the true initiation.

And what are the constituent elements of this kind of initiation? What kind of place do you need? What preparation is required? Nothing. Usually it's considered that for initiation you require a particular place. And the first questions that arise are what objects will be required? What do we have to get in order for this to be conducted? Something to put on people's heads or something to be drunk.

In fact, you don't need anything. The master explains and makes matters understood a bit, let's say, through the mirror. Through the mirror, what he does is he gives an explanation. This explanation is oral. Showing you a mirror is symbolic. Through the use of this symbolism one understands. One finds oneself in this knowledge, and that is what's called direct transmission.

A transmission in which you're shown a mirror is all three transmissions. He says "Look in the mirror. Look in the mirror and you'll see something." There's nothing else. You see your own face. Is that the real face of the individual or not? That's not the individual. That's only the reflection. And thus we know. This is because we know we're in what we call dualistic vision.

So this vision which appears in the mirror, where does it come from? How does it arise? And right now, where is it? Even though one sees it, where is it? And afterward, how will it end? All of those issues which arise when we search in the mind, when we do the practice we described of searching the mind, they're all present here.

If we go to search for thought, it can be more complicated. But if we look directly in the mirror, it's much simpler. Because there's a concrete mirror and you're seeing something in it. And our mental capacity doesn't even need to enter for dealing with, for grappling with, the questions of where it arises from, where it is, where it will disappear to.

So the principle here is that one observes one's own condition a bit, and thus one begins to understand well what is meant by essence, nature, and energy. That introduction is what is called the yedrol thamchad wang, that is, the true initiation.

Somebody may feel somehow that it's necessary to do something more. Something more external can be done. You've all heard that very rigpay tsal wang, that is, charging a bit

our existence as body, as voice, and mind all together. But that famous rigpay tsal wang arises directly out of the yedrol thamchad wang.

The principle of initiation in the Dzogchen teaching is only this. When man for his reasons is not satisfied, he creates more things. And above all, those who have more of a Tantric way of thinking, in the Dzogchen Upadesha there's also four initiations, just as in our red book, we have four ways of practicing. First we have the shintu tromay (shin-tu spros-med), then the rabtu tromay (rab-tu spros-med), then the tromay (spros-med), and trojay (spros-bcas).

Tro means that one has some concept, or term, or definition. Rabtu tromay means "super without concept", that means directly just as we've said that the yedrol thamcad wang is like that. Then if you're not satisfied with that, if you're not happy with that, you can do the shintu tromay. Shintu means very, very much. So it's not "super without form". It's "very much without form". Here there's more collaboration, more activity, with body, voice and mind, and you can do something with that. This is more similar to the level of rigpay tsal wang.

And if you're still not satisfied, then we do tromay, that is, without concept. But you can at least do a little bit of visualization, and an introduction is performed. But if you're still very much attached to something like Tantrism, you've got to get your hands on something. Then you use the way of transformation. You use visualization in order to do introduction. Many times people ask very much of this. I don't think this has much to do with knowledge. Because in connection with knowledge, if you really get to work, I don't think there's much need for ritual. Because ritual just complicates matters, according to me.

Let's say a person receives an initiation of the Anuttarat Tantra. He can close his eyes. He can be in perfect position. He can seem a very serious matter, and he hasn't understood a thing. This is what happens much much much of the time in formal initiations. For many people it might be far far ... [tape gap] ... But I only understood what he really meant, what he was really communicating, afterwards, after that initiation. We've all got attachments like that.

Last year I went to the north of Italy. And I gave of course a Dzogchen teaching. And there were four or five young people who were students of Sufism. They were very interested in the teaching. They said "We really want to follow this. We want to become practitioners of it." I said "Fine. I've taught you all there is to teach. I've told you the whole story." "Yea", they said, "but we'd like an initiation." "I told you everything I have to tell you," I said.

But two or three more times they came back "Come on. We'd really like an initiation." I explained to them "Initiation means entry into knowledge. There's absolutely no point in something formal, ritual, if you haven't understood the meaning. And if you have understood the meaning without formality, then that's sufficient."

They said they'd understood something, but they didn't feel initiated yet. I said "Well let's see what happens some other time, because I don't even know what to do with you

now." Then before I left there, one of them said "Will you at least touch me a little." That's our attachment and our limitation.

So when I was with my master, I was insisting that he do the ritual initiation. Then one day was the day of Padmasambhava. He said "Ok, today I'll give you an initiation." And he called his disciple, the one who's called Abusudan, because Abusudan was expert at doing things. Because without Abusudan he didn't know how to do it at all. Abusudan prepared the mandala, and the offerings, and the book, and everything.

But before you can give a formal initiation, he who is giving the initiation, must take initiation. You have to do a whole series of practices, visualization, enter into the mandala, and then he's enabled to give initiation. So since I've asked for an initiation, and he has agreed to give it, he has to do the initiation the right way as it should be.

So Abusudan had helped him the whole morning to read it, to do the visualization, and so forth. Then just a little before noon, they called me "OK, ready now." Then I, and there was my father there, and there were two or three disciples. And he began to give this initiation. But he couldn't make it with the reading. At the beginning there's a bit of introduction. And every so often he needed the help of Abusudan to make it out, to read it.

Then came the point at which he had to do the chinbay (phyin ??), the empowerment. You've seen many masters give initiation. At this point where they do the chinbay, they bring incense, and odors. It's as if they invite divine wisdom, and then it dissolves in one. And at this point, the master sounds the damaru and the bell, and sings and invokes that wisdom to bring it to the place of initiation. Well-trained masters can do that thing in a twinkling. They're perfectly ready. It's not difficult.

And I knew the initiations very well, knew the form, and I knew he had arrived at that point then. And there just before the text of what has to be read aloud, or what has to be sung, are kinds of notes, instructions, as to "Now you sing. Now you do this. Now you do that", explaining what has to be done. In Tibetan where there are these notes, like stage instructions, they're written a little smaller.

But my master was completely blocked there because the writing was small, and Abusudan couldn't see well either. So he was saying "Well what's this? What's written here?" Abusudan was helping him read it. He said to "Sound the bell and the damaru". So he took the bell and sounded that for a quarter of an hour. He put that down and started reading again. He said "Well, the bell is sounded. Now we sound the damaru." He took the damaru and went at it for another quarter of an hour. Then he began to read again. In effect what it says there is that "while sounding the bell and the damaru, you sing." "So" he said "Well the bell has been sounded. The damaru has been sounded. Now we sing."

And in general for the chinbay moment in the initiation, for specific initiations, there are specific melodies for this singing. Certainly he didn't use any traditional melody. He made up his own tune, and one could say it didn't really sound

like singing. But he proceeded, and every so often interrupting himself because he couldn't read what the words were, to ask Abusudan for help. This lasted for at least another twenty minutes, but in total seriousness. Because since I had seriously asked for an initiation, he was seriously giving it.

I was really shocked. Because my background, I was totally accustomed to seeing masters perfectly prepared, ready to elegantly perform the initiation in a perfect way. And I thought "My God, how strange, a master who doesn't even know how to perform an initiation." But I had a true conviction, a real conviction, that this was my master. Because much before going there, I had dreamed of this master. And I'd had the indication from dream to go to him. And even though I found everything very strange, at bottom I was completely convinced.

So he continued with the initiation until late late in the day. It was almost dark. Finally it finished. So the end when it finished we did a Ganapuja. In effect, it was actually done by me and by Abusudan. The master was just present. So when everything was over, and the Ganapuja was completed, and we finished the whole ritual, I was ready to go home. And I was preparing to say goodbye to the master. I thanked him for the initiation. The master said "Where do you think you're going?" "I'm going to sleep at home" I said. "By now the whole rite, the whole initiation, is finished." He said "It's not finished at all. Nothing's finished. You sit down again."

He made me stay there with him. He closed the door. And he began to speak. He began to speak of the principle of initiation and what's really meant by that. "Initiation in Dzogchen teaching means knowledge. And all that which you do in ritual simply doesn't enter. It isn't relevant." He began to speak to me as man to man, as one human being to another, in our language, understandable language. And he spoke for perhaps more than two hours.

Then and there I began to really understand what's meant by initiation. And I was very much surprised. Because I realized that up to then, I'd received hundreds, hundreds, of traditional initiations in different traditions, and I'd never understood anything. Initiation as we understand it in the Dzogchen teaching is like that. I had never understand that until I met master Changchub Dorje. It doesn't mean I hadn't had any initiations. I'd had many many initiations including many many initiations of Dzogchen. I had initiations like the Nyingthig Yazhi, and the Lama Yangthig. I'd had these initiations from the time I was four years old.

So what really matters in transmission is understanding, and you have to really understand what transmission is. Transmission is of supreme importance in the Dzogchen teaching for developing our knowledge. The first thing is to have what Garab Dorje refers to in the first of his three last statements "direct introduction". It means finding yourself directly in this knowledge.

And then we work with practice. And then you stay "without doubts". And for this you have to work continually with transmission. And then we say "continuing in this state of knowledge". And that's the method for total realization.

Total realization means maturation, the ripening, of this knowledge. For this too you must work always with transmission.

So you see that transmission is very important. If there were no transmission, then Dzogchen would become the same thing as Sutra. Then there would be no difference between them. We know that in the Sutras they say that for total realization you require many kalpas. In a teaching like Tantrism, you say that you can also achieve realization in the bardo. In the Dzogchen teaching, we say that you can have realization of the body of light in this life.

Why is it that in Tantrism and in Dzogchen, we say that in one life one can achieve realization. Because there's a method of transmission. And there's knowledge of how to charge one with this transmission, how to make transmission work. And it's through this that one achieves realization. So you mustn't forget the transmission is fundamental. When we work at practice, also collective practice, every time there's also explanation. Whatever the practice, it could be a semzin for example, everything that we do is to develop the transmission, to deepen the transmission. This is fundamental, and this is just how important transmission is.

Transmission is present from the very beginning of the knowledge of Dzogchen. One speaks of the lineage of transmission. Very often they refer to, or make use of, the transmission lineage to justify a school or a particular sect or tradition. But that's not important in the Dzogchen teaching. If you want to know something about the history of the transmission, you can study that.

But the principle of transmission is that it comes to a person from a master. This master has a true knowledge, that is, a living lived knowledge. And this knowledge, this knowledge that he lives in, didn't come out of nowhere. Somebody quite surely transmitted it to him. And a transmission of knowledge can only come from one who has had real experience. And he had the transmission from someone who had true experience.

So this knowledge and the transmission are linked together like a chain. It's of no importance what external appearance the human being may have. So it's of no great importance what tradition, or what school, we're talking about. What's important is to find the transmission, and to find oneself in the state of this transmission. If I have this knowledge, my knowledge is linked with the transmission from the very beginning when it came from Samantabhadra, as if my knowledge has entered into that dimension. This is what transmission is. And this is what the lineage of transmission is.

There's no need to confuse that with a school, or somebody asking you "What lineage of transmission do you belong to?" That kind of thing is really ridiculous. It means total ignorance of what transmission is. If you're talking about worldly matters, why that's another thing. But if we're talking of transmission, and we're trying to understand transmission, we're talking about a whole dimension, a state of transmission which is utterly beyond all limitations. It's through this that we develop our knowledge. It's over now.

[Wednesday afternoon, 21-Jul-82]

Now we're going to have a little explanation of the practice of the chod. The practice of the chod is a practice that was born and spread with a teacher, a master, who was called Machig Labdron (ma-gcig lab-sgron). She was a Tibetan woman, and when she was very young she was very good at reading, particularly reading aloud Tibetan books. And she went about, where invited, reading aloud from the Kanjur, and from the teachings of the Buddha, because there's a tradition of that kind in Tibet.

Doing so, she encountered many masters of many different traditions. And she received teachings in all the different styles: teachings of the Sutras, teachings at the Tantric level, as well as teachings of the Dzogchen system. And also, reading all these different texts, the Kanjur and in particular the Prajnaparamita, she acquired a profound knowledge of what she was continually reading. And in this was born, began to be born, the practice that we call the chod.

It was a practice in a style that arose afresh, entirely new, in that epoch. But its fundamental method is linked both to Tantric and Sutric sources. In fact, it derives from all these vehicles. In fact, when we look at the history of the chod, many consider that it belongs to a school called Shijed (zhi-byed), and that it's actually a part of that school's teaching. There was an Indian master who was called Phadampa (Pha-dam-pa). History tells us, the chronicles tell us, that he was twelve different times in Tibet. But we don't really know at what historical period that may have been, because some of the accounts place Phadampa in Tibet very very long ago, and others, a very long time more recently. So that there's a whole span of time, apparently, covered by these visits to Tibet, the most recent having been at the time of Machig Labdron.

In any case, Phadampa was a practitioner of Tantrism. And there exists his practice of the way of transformation linked with Sutra. And there are in his name certain explanations of Mahamudra. He was also a practitioner of Dzogchen. And so from his characteristic teaching was born this tendency which is called Shijed.

It is said that Machig Labdron followed principally this method of Shijed. But Shijed is not the chod as we practice it. Chod itself is actually a system composed by Machig Labdron. It's a practice that is always done chanting, visualizing, and sounding an instrument. It's not a practice like those of shinay, or sitting meditation.

In the Shijed method of Phadampa, there's, for example, a principal practice is what's called [Shijed] dra ma trulkhor (?? phrul-'khor). And there are six different principal practices there, all of them based on the path of transformation. And as in other practices, at the end one passes into shinay, and then ultimately into lhagtong (lhag-mthong).

Whereas the chod, from the beginning, operates through visualization, chanting, and finishes there too. It's above all a method in action, in movement. That is to say, it's a practice which makes much use of the actual working of energy.

But it's a completely other way of seeing the working of energy than you have in Tantra. Machig Labdron took a view of energy a bit closer to that of the Bonpo. Many current scholars and historians, when they try to categorize the chod, classify it among shamanistic phenomena. Because one of the characteristic aspects of the chod practice is what's called dur (??), and that's very famous.

When a person dies, in shamanism when a person dies, it's considered that a negative force emanating from the person can affect those who are still living. And when the person dies, there's a negative aspect to the energy of the dead person, a negative appearance which emerges from that energy which is called shed (??). And this is considered damaging not only to those still alive, but also an aspect of energy damaging to the person already dead. And to overcome, or neutralize, or nullify the affects of the shed, there's exists a practice, a ritual or ceremonial practice in Bon.

And then there are many of what are called tet (??). And they can be considered in effect as magic rituals. And it's characteristic of the practice of the chod that one does these things. But all of these come from the traditions and methods of the Bonpo. So Machig Labdron can be said to have had that vision of energy.

So what Machig Labdron did first of all was to investigate and analyze the nature of what we call divinities and evil spirits. She conducted this analysis at all levels, internal, external, secret. She discovered that the principle factor in the existence of these, just as had been understood in the Sutric teachings of Buddhism, was that they arise from the ego. And she understood that from there arise all the considerations that we group as good and as evil, that is, dualism.

A person who finds something good, satisfying, classifies that as positive. And whatever they find negative for themselves they consider to be renounced or refused. And right there, from that, arises the attitude, the typical attitude, of a person. This is explained, of course, in the Buddhist Sutras. But it doesn't end there, because there's also the more expanded consideration of how this interacts with secondary causes.

If I'm afraid, it's not just from the fear as such that my problem comes, but rather that my fear becomes a secondary cause of all that which will make me vulnerable to negative forces. Where do these negative forces come from? There also exist individuals, beings, who dominate these good and evil energies.

Thus she proceeded from the discovery that there were negative and beneficent forces outside us, to the further discovery that there are actual beings who dominate and govern these beneficent and negative forces. So Machig Labdron at this point realized that you aren't going to be able to deal with these forces just by negating them, nullifying them, refusing to recognize them, ignoring and forgetting them.

But rather since we live in the field of action of these forces, it was necessary to be knowledgeable about them, and actually deal with them. And that the way one deals with them, and the way one applies this knowledge is by charging

the appropriate forces by ... [tape gap] ... Thus she understood that one doesn't transcend or overcome these forces merely mentally at the level of abstraction and ideas, but actually concretely getting a handle on them, and energizing the forces that work for you.

From there, she launched a way of practicing quite different from any other. And as we examine her life history, she had a lot of problems, physical problems, like illnesses. And there was also, there were grave problems, as for example, illness, among her disciples, and among her family members. She discovered above all that all of this can arise from the ego, and the attachments of the individual himself. When we have a great deal of attachment, that itself can be a cause for receiving and for being exposed to negative forces.

So from here was born her idea, that the method for dealing with this was to totally renounce ego and attachment. For example, if we're faced with a problem normally, we normally go to somebody who, it is said, has the power to help us overcome the problem. And we ask for protection. And that person may give us protection, and in effect communicate to negativity that it mustn't disturb, that it mustn't enter this zone or harm this individual. This individual then lives within the limitations of that shelter, and of its size.

But if he minimally emerges from that space or that shelter into more openness, he's in trouble. Because he's basically in conflict with that negativity. Machig Labdron understood instead that's not the principle for dealing with this. If I have a grave anxiety, a grave concern in regard to some negativity, the way to deal with it is to get rid of the concern, get rid of the anxiety.

Let's say that I've got to deal with an evil spirit. Let's say that this evil spirit has on some occasion entered my house, and disturbed me. And I have this pre-occupation that this may happen at any time. I don't close the door to this evil spirit. When I've discovered that that's my problem, that that worry is my problem, first thing I do is throw open the door. I say "Come right in! What would you like?" And the evil spirit says "I want you head", for example. I say "Take it. It's all yours."

What does the head mean? The head is our ego. Because at bottom, our spirit, what we define as essence, nature and energy, is not our head. This basic error, or confusion, of what we are, is the discovery that she made. When we don't defend, when we don't protect, or hide, or shelter anything, total victory is immediately ours.

But the idea, just as idea, doesn't make any difference, doesn't work out, because that doesn't correspond to practical reality. At this point, this idea has to be applied, has to be really put in action, in regards body, voice and mind, and this becomes real protection. So this, which is the practice of Machig Labdron, arose, and it's called primarily lujin (lus-sbyin). Lu means the body, and above all means our material, physical body, because that's what we're worried about most. Jin means the gift.

If I'm capable of giving away my body, I've got nothing to worry about, no pre-occupation left. The concerns which we call ??, or the concern of being mauled, of being torn apart,

about being eaten alive, all that is concern for the body. Certainly the idea here is not that you go throw yourself before a hungry tiger or some wild animal. The real principle involves our idea and way of seeing things which has degenerated into attachment. But our consideration, the consideration or notion here of negative forces, or of the beings which dominate and govern negative forces, is not to be confused with material, physical beings. So this gift that we make, the giving away of the body, the lujin, is above all through concentration.

In comparison to a teaching like that of the Buddhist Sutras, there what's spoken of primarily is the accumulation of merit. We talk about the accumulation of merit or of good actions; there's no higher action than giving away the body. But that's not the whole story. The principle concern is to overcome our attachment. What Phadampa, the master of whom we spoke, said on this point, when he gave advice to his disciples, he said that man, the individual, is not conditioned by his vision, that is by things as they present themselves, by what's there; he's conditioned by his attachment to what's there. So overcoming attachment becomes one of the fundamental necessities. And to perform this overcoming of attachment, an optimum method, perhaps the best that exist, is the chod.

And when we do the chod, we always use the damaru and the bell. And why do we do this? Because this is one way of charging energy and also guaranteeing presence, immediacy and awareness. If we want all kinds of forces to be alerted, we go somewhere in the woods or wherever, and start sounding the damaru and the bell and chanting. Even the dogs'll start barking.

So sound, in general, functions to charge up all the energies we're making contact with. And then when we do visualization, in concert with the sound we're making, this visualization also maximizes or energizes the vibration of the moment. The damaru, what's sounded in this practice, is at its origin, has it's origins in Tantrism. For example in the practice of the Vajrayogini a damaru is used, a kind damaru is used. The damaru is a symbol of energy, that is, of sound.

But then Machig Labdron took this same damaru which at it's origin was very small, and used a great big one, to make more sound. Because when one goes to a deserted place, or to a peculiar place, like a burying ground, a sound, a loud sound, like that of a damaru can help a great deal in causing all possible presences, in provoking all possible forces, to be there and respond. And as such, as an instrument, the damaru is a bit different than other instruments.

You're aware that the damaru has two faces. And there are two pellets which strike these surfaces. When we turn the damaru, both pellets strike and sound at the same time. They're striking two different faces, yet they're striking at the same moment. You continually are turning it left, right, left, right, and striking and sounding both surfaces. ... [tape gap] ... The two sounds, the two faces, unite as one. The two faces represent negative and positive energy. Sound always is emblematic of energy. So the damaru is always employed in doing this practice.

And then when you do the practice of the chod, you use many words, you chant or sing many words. But these words are not some kind of prayer or some kind of mantra. The words are a guideline for the visualization one is doing.

When you have to do a long, complicated visualization, if you have to do it in complete silence, it takes a long time. At times, you may also be distracted. You may lose sight of, or forget some piece of, the successive visualization. But when we guide ourselves with words, the words themselves remind us of and coordinate the visualization. Moreover, in the chod, the pronunciation, that is, how we're chanting or singing, is itself productive of vibration. This is how the chod is in fact practiced.

The practice that we do of the chod, here, starting on page forty, it's a chod which is essentially a condensation of the words of the chod of the master Jigmay Lingpa. The words at the very beginning and the very end are called Khandro Gadgyang (mkha'-'gro gad-rgyangs). But the Khandro Gadgyang is a bit longer than this. It's not put together quite in this way. Here it's compiled a little more simply, a little briefer, for easier practice.

For a practitioner like a Tibetan it's relatively easy to do a long practice like the Khandro Gadgyang. We did practices of the chod far, far longer than the Khandro Gadgyang. Because for a Tibetan, reading Tibetan is no problem. But for a Westerner, who already doesn't know the Tibetan language, even if he succeeds in pronouncing a few words, he doesn't remember what the meaning is.

So if you put a heap of words together and make a long complicated business of it, it's very hard that anything is accomplished. So it's convenient, it's appropriate that we use few words, but know what they mean. So we've used this chod, which is a bit more condensed. I'll give you a little information, I'll inform you a bit about the origins and meaning of these words.

The Khandro Gadgyang, the chod of the Khandro Gadgyang, is a gongter, that is, a spontaneous terma which came to the mind of the Master Jigmay Lingpa. Khandro means the dakinis. Gadgyang means the laughter. So this chod, which appeared as a spontaneous treasure in Jigmay Lingpa's mind, means "The Laughter of the Dakinis."

On page forty, from the words "Jigmay tulzhug" ('jigs-med brtul-zhugs) down to the second PHAT almost at the bottom, this governs the characteristic visualization which is called sinay (??). Sinay means to force everything into submission. You have no fear of anything. Finding yourself before a very fierce spirit or divinity doesn't bother you at all. I'm not afraid of anybody. Because I know that all fear, and all trouble is linked to my ego. Because however potent divinity or evil spirit, I know that everything can function only if there's a cause, and therefore the negativity can only touch me because of my ego.

So the second line here on page forty means that with knowledge of the state beyond the division or distinction between samsara and nirvana, in the state of such knowledge beyond such duality, there are no problems that I have to take into account. When, instead, dualism and division exist, then

there exists the concern with, the consideration of divinities and spirits. It's all rooted in our ego.

So it says "I dance on the head of this ego." If I'm dancing on it, it means I certainly have no fear of it. So it says that I understand that divinities, spirits, all of these are expressions of ego. And then in the next verse you go on to invite - ah, no, in this verse you invite all of the masters, all of the Herukas, all of the Dakinis, to come, dance with me, on my ego. This is all wording from the Khandro Gadgyang, that is, from the chod of Jigmay Lingpa.

After this comes a visualization of what's usually called the tree of refuge. But really what's being understood here is that if I'm taking refuge, if I'm committing myself to Bodhicitta, etcetera, I want witnesses. So I call on my tsaway lama (rtsa-ba'i bla-ma), my root master, to come be a witness, and I call on - we're at the top of page forty-one - the first line - I call on all of the lineages of all three of the transmissions spoken of this morning: gong (dgongs), direct lineage; da (brda), the symbolic, and nyangyud (snyan-brgyud), the oral. All three transmission lineages, I call on them all to come witness the commitment I'm making and the direction I'm taking. Then I call on all of the yidams, that is, all of the divinities, all of the herukas, I call then on all the dakinis in the next linsignorane - In the presence of all of these, and in the presence of the dharmapalas, the guardians of the teaching.

Then, comes the next verse, which is a way, in their presence and with their testimony, of taking refuge. And this way of taking refuge is very important. From this phrasing of the refuge, you'll finally understand what taking refuge is all about. This makes you understand the real meaning of true refuge.

Now I'm going to explain a bit these phrases. The middle verse of page forty-one: "rangjung rigpa chomay di" (rang-byung gi rig-pa bcos-med 'di). The reference here is to the state of the individual, the knowledge of the state of the individual, of the underlying condition of the individual, which is self-perfected. "chomay di" means it's uncorrected; it's unmodified; it's authentically what it is and has always been.

"Di" means "this", so we're speaking of this underlying, authentic, unmodified state of the individual absolutely as it is, not the state of the Buddha, the Bodhisattvas, enlightened and awakened somebody other than us. We're talking here right about the individual himself, his condition. On the next line, we say - we have the last word of the second line there: "marigpay" (ma-rig-pas), ignorance, and just not knowing, having no idea of, not aware of, where to take this refuge, that it's in one's own state.

So in the third line, "dugnalgi gyatsor chingwanam" (sdug-bsngal gyi rgya-mtshor bying-ba rnams), the individual is fallen into the ocean of suffering, as a result of that ignorance, as a result of not knowing that he can take refuge in his very own condition. So the conclusion is that all of the beings suffering transmigration, suffering in the immensity of suffering, are experiencing that precisely because they don't know that their refuge, their shelter, is

their own nature and underlying condition.

And the last line of that middle verse, page forty-one, "kusumgi gongpay kyabtusol" (sku-gsum gyi dgongs-pas bskyab-tu-gsol): "kusumgi" means the three bodies. This doesn't refer to something outside of us. It's not the Dharmakaya body of the Buddha. It's not the Sambhogakaya, the Bodhisattva, no, no. It's our three bodies. Because there's the word "gongpay" which means the state of knowledge of those three bodies. This means that these three bodies are actually the essence, nature and energy of the individual himself. And we obtain salvation through this very knowledge. And true refuge is exactly this.

Also, in the Buddhist Sutras, when we say Namoh Buddhaye, we take refuge in the Buddha, because Buddha, it is said offers us the path. And what do we do with the path? I have to apply it. I have to realize myself. So the true and ultimate taking of refuge is to enter into knowledge and to realize oneself, to grasp it and realize that knowledge. So these phrases are very important for understanding that.

These words, this refuge of Jigmay Lingpa, and the phrases of Bodhicitta, page twenty-six, "Dagdag thayas semjan kun" (bdag dang mtha'-yas sems-can kun), which come from a Tantra of Anuyoga, we could say that between these two verses we have a complete teaching adequate for communicating the whole knowledge. So these are very important for understanding well. And this is still, these phrases here too, are from the Khandro Gadgyang.

Now we're lower down page forty-one, we have verses of Bodhicitta. It's another verse. We're on the last line of these verses. It says, "Redog dang dralwar semkyeddo" (re-dogs dang bral-bar sems-bskyed do), and this is the very principle of our commitment. Rewa means hope. Dogpa means preoccupation or anxiety or fear. So dralwar means beyond both of those I must find myself. Semkyed means I commit myself. This is what we normally speak of as the vow of Bodhicitta.

Sutric Buddhism, when we speak of taking Bodhicitta, receiving Bodhicitta, we say, I commit myself, I dedicate myself totally to the benefit of all beings. In the practice of the chod, and in the practice of the teaching of Dzogchen, there is always before practice an intention, a commitment. And the way one moves with that intention, the way one presents that intention, is what's called Bodhicitta at this level.

And here the commitment is that I commit myself to finding myself, to living myself, beyond hope and fear. The hope referred to is the hope of nirvana, of realization. The preoccupation or anxiety is the fear of samsara or transmigration. In general, usually when we apply our minds, as they say in the Buddhist Sutras, we always commit ourselves to try to accumulate good actions, to overcome negativity.

But when we come to finding oneself and living in the state of contemplation, then, from this point of view, the consideration of samsara and of realization is dualism. If you can't get past that, you'll never get to total realization. So one commits oneself, right up front, to going beyond hope and fear. And these phrases too, very very

important phrases, are from the Khandro Gadgyang.

Then, behind this on page forty-two, are phrases which we can consider the offering of the mandala. Those of you who have done something like the practice of the ngondro already know that there's something called the "offering of the mandala". It's the offering of everything, in order to accumulate good actions. At the Sutric level of practice, it would be an actual material offering, rather. And through concentration one would offer up all the world, all of the world's treasure, the dimension of the divinities and all that it contains.

But when you get to the Tantric level, in visualization you can offer up also all dimension of the Sambhogakaya. And then in the the Dharmakaya style, you can find yourself in the presence of the state of rigpa. And so, today, there are many different styles in the offering up of the Mandala.

But if one has the consideration that there's something to offer, you principally begin at the material level of the body, the body being the base to which everything is related. As we've already stated, the principle of the chod is just that. Here, page forty-two, it's presented as the offering of a mandala. And here at the last line of that offering, "dagzingi tsa ..." (bdag-'dzin gyi rtsa-ba chod-par shog), the implication is the radical overcome. Through this offering of mandala there's the radical overcoming of attachment. This too is wording from the Khandro Gadgyang

Then, beneath this, "OM machig mala" (OM ma-gcig-ma la gsol-ba-'debs) is the invocation of Machig Labdron. This is not from the Khandro Gadgyang. This is utilized in all of the traditions of the practice of the chod. It's considered that these words are the actual words of Machig Labdron. Machig Labdron had many, many children, many sons, who were great practitioners of the chod. So some of these children, some of these sons, asked her to give them - their mother to give them - a practice that was very efficacious, very brief, that could be utilized anywhere at any time. Machig Labdron gave them this kind of invocation. But this invocation is also a way of deepening transmission. It's a way of obtaining, of developing, of maintaining transmission. So when we practice the chod, here, we're actually also maintaining and deepening our transmission.

When we take initiation or transmission, above all in the style of the Yogatantra, we visualize something external - the form or image of the master, that is, the Guru, the devas, or the dakinis, whatever. Just as we explained hitherto, we do a Guruyoga with the image before us of Padmasambhava. And all of the lineage of the masters, all of the lineages of our teachers are visualized in some sense together, unified in this figure of Padmasambhava.

The unified state of all those lineages and masters manifests in the letters OM, AH and HUM in that figure. From those letters, the white OM, the red AH, the blue HUM descend rays of the same colored light to the corresponding three locations in ourselves. In this way we gradually receive transmission of the body, of the voice, of the mind. Then, at the end, it's non-gradual. All three come together in a unified way. This is the way of taking transmission, or

initiation which originates in the Yogatantra style.

When we go to visualize, we always begin in this fashion, and then at the very end we carry out the unification. This invocation of Machig Labdron's communicates and functions at that level, in that way. "OM machig mala solwa deb": in effect, I ask for the wisdom and the transmission from the body of the One Mother, that is, of Machig Labdron. "AH machig mala" refers to the voice, the state of her voice. "HUM" refers to the state of her mind. Then, with the OM, the AH and the HUM of the state of Machig Labdron, this light and this wisdom of the state arrives to me.

Then in the penultimate, the next to last line, where you see "ku sung thuggis chinchin phob" (sku gsung thugs kyis byin chen phob) you see body, voice and mind together sending, or the wisdom coming, from all three simultaneously. This is the non-gradual or total transmission. The last line, "Ma yumchen gopang tobpar shog" (ma-yum-chen go-'phang thob-par shog), this is the moment of unification, moment of completeness, of completion of the Guruyoga. For which reason this is a very important practice.

Next, we have something that's like the core, or the fundamental body of the whole lujin. Here the words are not from the Khandro Gadgyang. But they're still words from another location of Jigmay Lingpa. These are words used in then ngondro of the Longchen Nyingthig. Because in the Khandro Gadgyang the lujin is longer. If somebody wants to do a practice that's even simpler than what's here, it's enough to do just pages forty-three and forty-four. Because that's a complete lujin, or offering of the body, if somebody isn't up to using all those words.

Page forty-three: first of all, what you do is you visualize, and you concentrate, a kind of transfer. You see at the second line, page forty-three, "sem tsangpay gonay yingla thon" (sems-tshangs-pa'i sgo-nas dbyings-la-thon), that's where this transfer is effected. "Sem" means the mind. "tsangpay gon" means through the so-called gates of Brahma. When we do the practice of the transfer, the phowa ('pho-ba), you transfer out through the gate or door of Brahma, the fontanel.

If we look at the kapala, the skull cup, you see a tiny hole. Or if we look at the head of a new-born babe, this is the place where it's not yet grown bone. It's the fontanel of the head. It's where the nerve is always pulsing on the top of the head. That's the location of what's called the gate or door of Brahma. And that's the exit when you do the transfer.

"Yingla thon" means to go out into space. When we do the transfer, consciousness goes out into the space outside the body. In the transfer, we speak of dushay sonden (??), that is, the three indispensable elements or considerations. The considerations are: where you're going, who or what is going, and what road you take. In the transfer, in the phowa practice, where you're going is a visualization of Vajrasattva, or Amitabha, or something of that kind.

But now we're not doing the transfer. We're just getting out. The mind is leaving. So here we don't specify where we're going. It's just that we're getting out of this body into space. But what happens when you get outside the body?

This is our mind, our consciousness that's out of the body now. It's not disappearing. It immediately manifests itself in the form of something like Dorjepamo (rdo-rje phag-mo) or Vajrayogini.

Here it's called "tromar gyur" (khros-mar-gyur). Troma is a very, very fierce or wrathful form of Dorjepamo. If you don't know that form, or you don't feel up to being that wrathful, you can use Vajrayogini. It's true, because sometimes in the practice of the chod there are many actions that have to be performed. And in that case, it's very useful to transform and manifest as Troma, that is, as the most energetic, the most wrathful ferocious, terrible, possible form.

But if you don't have any idea what she looks like, or what Vajrayogini looks like, or what Dorjepamo looks like, it's perfectly okay to use the image to transform into Sihamukha as you find her on page twenty-nine. You see this figure who has in her right hand a moon-shaped knife, and in her left hand a kind of lance.

At this point we're back on page forty-three with the lines where you see "tromar gyur". You manifest, you become a DaKini like that Sihamukha, or Dorjepamo. With its right hand, with the knife, the drigu (gri-gug) it's called, which is in it, you cut the head, the skull of that corpse, the corpse which is you. But you're now right in front of that corpse which was you. At this point, I'm not that body, I'm this dakini figure as which I've manifested, and that body is no longer me, it's just a corpse. You don't think of yourself as in the body, and "Oh, oh, here comes the Vajrayogini or Dorjepamo, or Sihamukha come to slice my head off." That's not how you think of it.

With your left hand you take this skull and you put it on a little pyre of three skulls which represent body, voice and mind. And this is a sort of way of cooking for offering all of that body. You've seen that in the hands of all these dakini figures, in the right hand there's this knife, and in the left hand in the actual hand, there's a kapala or skull cup. This skull cup is usually full of blood. Or, in the cases where it's a peaceful figure, it's explained that the skull is full of nectar. But in any case, this is a symbol of the division between subject and object. And it's a symbol of the division between active and passive. The knife cuts, the skull cup holds, receives. So within these two terms, active and passive, subject and object, this embraces all things. And so this is based on our dualistic conception.

Then in the next to last line - page forty-three - of these verses: "Atung dang HAM gis dudtsir zhu" (A-thung dang HAM gyis bdud-rtsir zhu). The "Atung" and the "HAM" were explained the other day when we spoke of the practice of detong mitogpa. This "Atung" refers to a symbol that's used in capital letter written Tibetan. It's a kind of line or stroke which signifies the end of a sentence, a triangular stroke. And the real meaning of the letter A here on the "Atung" - means the letter A, and tung means that it's brief, means that the A is a very brief. It becomes a kind of stroke, or triangular stroke. ... [tape gap] ... It's like a red triangle. And it's a symbol of the solar energy, or solar

force, like a flame.

The HAM we've said is either like the Tibetan letter HAM upside down, or it's like a drop or pellet which dissolves or which melts as it receives the heat from the Atung. And that represents the lunar energy. It represents method in Tantrism. When we represent this in the form of the three letters it's with the white OM. And energy, that is, voice is represented by the red AH. For which reason there's this Atung, red as if it were lighting a flame. And that's the flame, and the HAM, the nectar, is like the water that you're cooking in. Since this solar and lunar force always exist, so you use the energy to cook. You're cooking in the nectar as if it were water, all contained within the Kapala, or skull cup, which was your own cranium before.

And what are you cooking now? In the third line from the bottom, inside that skull cup you've put your own material body, and in fact what you've got in there now is the whole universe. So what you're visualizing now is an enormous offering.

In the last line we speak of making this offering with the power of three words. We're making the offering with the power of the three words OM, AH and HUM, which represent the unified state of the body, voice and mind of all the enlightened and realized beings. With the mantric power of these three syllables, OM, AH and HUM, with the power of that mantra, we perform what is written here, "chang pel gyur" (sbyang spel bsgyur), that is we purify - "chang"; we expand or enlarge - "pel"; we transform - "gyur".

Why do you have to purify and transform? Because when we perform the widest possible chod, we speak of the white offering, the red offering, the black offering, the offering of various colors. There are many different offerings we can give. It depends on who we invite to table. But in general when we make an offering we always have four principle categories of guests.

We have the higher guests, that is to say, the Buddha, the saints, the Bodhisattvas, the illuminated ones. If before us we have as guests a thousand Buddhas, for example, we're not going to offer them a bloody mess of meat and bones and gristle. All that impurity we're going to purify. We transform it into splendid nectar, or something else that's offerable.

Then we have a second category of guests, like the Herukas, for example. And it's necessary to perform transformation appropriate to each of these divinities as he presents himself. So we have to transform. Then we have what we call the different qualities of guests like the Mahakalas, and the Dharma guardians, and the like. For quality folk, you need quality offerings. So we have to transform everything so it's rather stylish, and elegant.

If one of the other guests is more concerned with flavor than with appearance, we transform to give appropriate flavor. When you do the practice of the chod, there actually develop nyams, that is, experiences of these presences. And if you have something like an apparition or a nyam, you work with the nyam. You have to transform.

Above all if you've prepared very little, and you find

that you've got an awful lot of guests, you're going to have to be able to multiply. So that's what the term expand has to do with. Since there's no limit to what the mind can imagine, you might as well prepare amply for lots of guests.

Then there's another category of guests, a third category of guests called gyagri (??). Here are guests, above all to whom we owe something, to whom we have to make a payment. Here we have to probably make a karmic payment. These are also forces who dominate negativity. We've caused something, and we have to answer for it. And these types to whom we owe some payment can be of all different characters.

For example I may have stolen a piece of gold from somebody at some point. And I've got to pay that off or it's going to remain an unpaid debt. So what I'm saying is "Listen, I've got no gold, but take a piece of my flesh." But suppose he doesn't like my flesh. He says "Flesh doesn't interest me. I'm not hungry. I want the gold." No way I can make him take my flesh in place of his gold. Much easier to transform into a chunk of gold, a nugget bigger than my head. And, he's very satisfied.

So, since the principle here is transformation, there's no limit to what we can transform into. Nor, unfortunately, is there any set limit on the debts that we may have. In the face of the necessities and demands that are made, I try to transform into all of the appropriate things. And, I multiply and expand all that.

Then the last category of guests, the fourth category of guests, is called those of the six lokas. What I'm doing is putting good causes in all those lokas. This is a gift made out of compassion. There are beings like the pretas, or hungry ghosts, for example. I can offer them a whole universe made of my body, and they don't get anything out of it. Because they don't have the cause for enjoyment. But with my concentration, and through the mantric power of OM, AH, HUM, perhaps I can help them to enjoy at least a drop of water.

So we must have awareness of the usefulness of all of these modalities of transformation. There are beings who are called driza (dri-za). These are beings who live for long long periods in the bardo of existence. And they can enjoy only odors. There's no point offering them anything else. Most important in this case is to offer them a bit of positive odor. And it can only enjoy it if it's authenticated with mantra, and achieved through transformation.

So one multiplies, expands, transforms all this offering for all possible kinds of being with an enormous labor of mind. And that moment when one is repeatedly reciting OM, AH, HUM, OM, AH, HUM, OM, AH, HUM - is a moment of maximum importance and effort of the lujin, of the offering of the body. If somebody happens to know the long series of visualizations of the chod - what is white offering, black offering, red offering and the like - this is where you would do it.

Now on the other side of that page. We're on page forty-four now. Every time you do the chod there's a continuous use of the word PHAT. Not just in the chod, but we also use PHAT sometimes to guide contemplation. Sometimes we use PHAT to separate our thought from the state. For example

in that invocation of Machig Labdron, we use PHAT to unite with her state. At times with the PHAT we invite all of those guests to our banquet. And also we use the PHAT to make the offering, and wish our guests "good appetite". And if there's some one of the guests who's cowering in a corner and who's not able to appreciate or make use of any of what we're offering, we use the PHAT both to render him capable of enjoyment, and also to invite the other guests to make room at the table.

When we do the practice of the chod, Nyams can present themselves in many different ways. You may not get that idea very easily, doing this practice collectively all together here. But try going into some dark and peculiar place and doing it on your own, and you can easily experience these nyams. So PHAT is a very important means in doing this practice.

Then at the top of page forty-four is a very peculiar design, a drawing. There are five Tibetan words: OM, HUM, TRAM, SHRI, AH. They're the five seed syllables or heart syllables of the five Dhyani Buddhas, that is, the manifestations of the five aggregations of which we are composed. When we do practice, we sound these five tsonli (??), as they are called. If you know how to sound them, this illustration describes, or diagrams how to sound them: to call, to invite the guests to be seated, to wish them a good appetite, to invite those who are more aggressive to behave well and have a little consideration for the weaker ones, to encourage the weaker ones to be a little less timid, to come closer, offering your help. There's a whole communication to all of these beings.

But you're not obliged necessarily to use the sound of the tsonli here. You perfectly well practice without the tsonli. But it's just that the tsonli is not a - it's not something good - this invitation is not something that it's very advisable to play around with, or fool with. Because it's best to just use it when you practice. Because somebody may answer your invitation.

Now we're going on with words of Jigmay Lingpa, the same verses from which the lujin was taken. In the next to last verse, "thar chodja chodjed chodyul kun" (mthar mchod-bya mchod-byed mchod-yul kun). This means that finally, at the very end, that which is offered, he who is offering, those to whom offering is made, all find themselves in the state of contemplation. This is a way of putting a positive cause into the existence of all beings. In this way, this practice is governed by contemplation.

Now, after this, on page forty-five, beginning with the letter AH, this is what's called the "gift of the teachings". These are two principle gifts: the material gift or offering, and the gift of the teaching. Certainly, the gift of the teaching is vastly more important than the material gift. But it's by no means likely that evil spirits are much interested in a gift of the teaching. For them, the material gift is far more important. However, when those spirits are present to have a little fun with the material gift, you do your best to communicate, if you can, a little bit at a time, the gift of the teaching. It's not said that it's a gift which works very

much for all of them.

But surely there are many many of the guests present who are somewhat interested in the teachings. With the major part of them, with the majority of them, it's just an attempt. But in any case, this offering of the teaching is made with the full presence of our senses, the full awareness of our senses. If you're fully sensing and feeling what you are offering, you may be able to communicate a cause. The actual verses used here are words of the historical Buddha, Buddha Shakyamuni. They come from a Sutra.

Then, the second verse on page forty-five, beginning with the next AH, from there right to the end is all an invocation. It's invocation comes from the Khandro Gadgyang, the chod of which we spoke at the very beginning. This invocation, if it's well understood, is very interesting. The words are a bit poetic. But the principle is above all the description of the way of being, the way of behaving of a Dzogchen practitioner. For which reason, it's rather important to understand it well.

This was a bit a condensation or summary of the practice of the chod. I don't think it's necessary to explain the words one by one. Nor is it necessary, because if you look a little, in the interline translation, there's a word by word translation, if you juggle it a little and put together the construction of the sentence, you'll understand perfectly well.

Then, as to the way we practice, singing, for example, many people say, "Now this way of singing, in what tradition is it?" Many people are concerned with whether it's a Kagyudpa tradition, a Nyingmapa tradition, whether it's a tradition of this school, this sect, that, or whatever. But we're not very interested in any of that. You can be quite sure that all songs of the chod, all the chants of the chod, each melody, each tune, of whatever school or tradition, each has its history.

There are many of these melodies that are used in all the schools, in the Kagyudpa school, and the Nyingmapa school, and the Sakyapa school and so forth. The last melody, the melody for the last series of verses, that begins "Ge dang migay togshog rangdrol la" (dge dang mi-dge'i rtog-tshogs rang-grol la), is called the chodpa konshar (?). There was a practitioner, a chodpa, of the chod, called Konshar, who had many many disciples. And his disciples followed this melody which was the way he sang it. But we don't know where Konshar got his melody, nor where he took it from.

There are many many examples like this, if we want to go back, if we want to examine the history back to its sources. It has nothing to do with school or tradition. It may be that somebody in a given tradition constructed a certain melody and they go on using it. Why do we in this little chod use these particular songs, sing in this particular way? It's not that we've followed some specified tradition. I'm not even saying that's how it was sung by my master or at my master's place. Nor am I telling you it's sung thusly at a given monastery at a given master - nothing of the kind.

I began to teach how to practice the chod when I began to teach Dzogchen. I had no intention of teaching the chod. I had only the intention of teaching certain practices of

Dzogchen. But while teaching, one night I had a dream: that all of us in that retreat were on a kind of cloud, a kind of mirage, sort of rocking on it. It seemed very strange, I didn't understand what that could mean.

After two or three days, I had another dream. I was in an open place, we were all facing south, because given where the sun rises, that was the direction, I was seated, I Namkhai Norbu was seated facing south, and everyone else was seated facing me. But it wasn't only people with whom we were doing the retreat. I saw hundreds and hundreds of people before me, and none of them were Tibetans. They were all Westerners.

And I was, in this dream, explaining the chod. I thought this was pretty odd, because I had no intention of teaching the chod. And when I finished explaining, I said "Now we'll do the practice." And everybody took out a damaru and a bell. I was astonished. I said to myself "Where did they all get damarus?" And I said "You all understood how it's sung?" Everybody said "Yep, we got it." So I said "All right, let's start singing." So I began, leading the singing.

But I didn't have a damaru or bell. At that moment I remembered that I had left my damaru and bell in Sikkim. And it was true, I had. Because when I came from Sikkim, I had had a very important damaru. I had had the damaru of a master who had been very very important, and I had a bit of attachment to that damaru. And so here in dream I think to myself "Gee that's too bad. My damaru is back in Sikkim. I said to all those people "You know how to sound, how to play, the damaru?" Everybody said "Yep, we got it." "Okay", say I, "let's start."

At that moment arrives in the dream, a woman with long long hair. She's neither very young or very old, maybe twenty-seven, eight, thirty years of age. She's very tall, and she had a kind of gypsy dress. And she brought me a damaru. I said "I don't need it, thank you. You play." She said "Don't you worry. I have my damaru." So I said "All right", and I accepted the damaru. And she sat down in front of me in the row of people, and brought forth her damaru and led the whole group.

But when I brought forth this damaru it was a damaru very different from the normal. First of all it was a very big damaru. And secondly it had only one skin, only one side. Normally a damaru has two faces, and then there is a means of holding it in the middle. This damaru had a way of being held, a place to be held, but it had only one face. I didn't understand how could it have only one dimension, one side. I was very curious about it. I thought to myself "Who knows how this is played?"

Normally a damaru has a sound because it has an inside, and that's hollow. And yet this had, if I moved it, it had the two pellets for playing. So I began to sound the damaru to guide the group. And everybody played, and everybody played splendidly. And this strange damaru had a sound, very wonderful sound, that seemed to go beyond all sound. So we did the whole chod, from the beginning to the end, and it was a spontaneous music of the chod. And this is the music of that chod, and this is the way that chod was structured. So, given that dream, I taught the chod. How is it sung? It's

sung just like that. That's the story of this chod. Finished.

[Thursday morning, 22-Jul-82]

I'm sure that many of you came here at some sacrifice. It cost you an effort or sacrifice to get here. I don't say that it's true of everyone. The same is true of me. I came from a far away country in Europe, with a little sacrifice. Presumably we make this effort, and therefore come, with a desire not to waste time, but rather to communicate something and to understand something. And this is something we can't do just any day of our lives.

So we try also to understand something between us, and I make the effort to explain principal considerations as much as possible. And then when we have the time, also secondary matters. I'm rather aware, I have it constantly present, that time is passing. If time passes and it seems to me that people haven't understood anything, I'm displeased. We're not doing some kind of lesson about a book, or from a book, but we're speaking of, and trying to understand, the very principle of Dzogchen. I think it's important that everyone be a bit aware of this, and collaborate on the matter.

Now we've spoken at least twice about the base, and what's meant by that in Dzogchen. We've more or less understood that, and what we call Dzogchen, that Dzogchen is not a concept, but it is our state, our underlying condition. It's also called the primordial state. And it's explained in terms of the three primordial wisdoms, and their characteristics, which are essence, nature and energy. And that's what one must understand, and what one must find oneself in the state of, in order to know.

At bottom, any teaching, whatever teaching it may have been, has always sought to address itself to this level. But the ways of taking people there, the ways of communicating about this dimension, are different in different teachings. We've spoken of Sutric Buddhism, for example, which proceeds intellectually to the grasp of shunyata, to the understanding of shunyata, emptiness. And so it's also characteristic of Sutra, when it turns to practice, that the first thing it speaks of is called shinay, that is, a state of calm.

This state of calm which represents, or is emblematic of, the primordial state in its characteristic we call essence. When we make an analysis of the three bodies, the corresponding characteristic is what we call Dharmakaya. Why? Because in each of these instances, the notion is of void, of what we call shunyata. This is why much is said of shinay.

As I explained yesterday, it's a characteristic of Tibetan Buddhism that Tantra too is explained in the framework of Sutra. So at the end of Tantric practice, at the end of kyerim where there is what is called dzogrim, they also use the term shinay. But it's not the case that shinay is a mode of practicing that is unique to Tantrism. Because what Tantrism works with most, and gives the most emphasis to, is a method that we can speak of as linked to clarity ... [tape gap] ... because the transmission took place via transformation. And the method we then use applies that manifestation of transformation.

So what we work with in Tantra is rather that which is called lhagtong. But when we talk about lhagtong in Sutric terms, it's a rather complicated matter. Complicated because first we've arrived in a state of void, and how can something else now present itself? So Sutrically speaking, lhagtong is conceived of as something that you passively receive. Somebody is in a state of shinay, and then there comes about, at a certain moment, a state of re-awakening. It's not said how it comes about. It's not said that there's a method, or that the method is for finding that state. So at the Sutric level lhagtong is defined simply as something more, a dimension more.

But in Tantrism, lhagtong is concretely that which one arrives at through transformation. But it's not particularly called lhagtong. Because in Tantrism there isn't, at the beginning, shinay. So you have to understand. Today, in the Mahamudra system, for example, masters first of all speak of shinay. Then they talk of lhagtong, and so forth. But if you go to look in the Anuttaratanttras, you'll never find these terms. So you have to understand that what they're doing is working with guidelines that come from the Sutras. Thus lhagtong really means a working with clarity. So it's very much linked - this content, this activity, is very much linked - to the path of transformation.

Now when we come to the Dzogchen teaching, its principle is what we call the path of self-liberation. And self-liberation means that one finds, and lets be, what is. "As is" also applies to our level of energy, of letting that be "as is". There's no need to go and find something other than or beyond what we see, what we find.

For example, if we say "three bodies", when we say Nirmanakaya, we mean that which the normal individual has contact with, something which is presented, which presents itself materially. And this materiality also possesses its underlying condition. But we don't have to go seeking that situation or condition. We simply have to examine and find how that materiality is, in what situation it actually is. It's very important to understand and perceive the distinctions between the method of Sutra, the method of Tantrism, the method of Dzogchen.

Then today, in modern times, masters who teach Mahamudra - I'm not saying all types of Mahamudra, but at least the Mahamudra that's taught in all the schools and traditions of Kagyudpa - they employ a method which comes directly from the Dzogchen system. Because they explain, for example, in terms of essence, nature and energy. And they further explain the states we speak of as naypa, gyowa (g.yo-ba), and rigpa. Because this, in the Dzogchen teaching, is very important that it be clearly understood.

Now why is it that in the Kagyudpa school they employ these explanations? Because in the Kagyudpa school there have been hundreds of masters who are practitioners of Dzogchen, and they've applied Mahamudra with their knowledge of Dzogchen, particularly in the Karma Kagyudpas, the Karmapa Rangjung Dorje (rang-byung rdo-rje), and in the Drugpa Kagyudpa ('brug-pa bka'-brgyud-pa), Padma Karpo (Pad-ma dkar-po). And then in the more recent history of the Kagyudpas, Togdan

Shakya Shri (rtogs-ldan shakya-shri). These masters very much re-integrated Dzogchen and Mahamudra.

But they've always gone to Mahamudra through the characteristic path of transformation. If it's not brought about in this way, it's no longer Mahamudra. Because it's not that there's some kind of contradiction between Mahamudra and Dzogchen, and they're two groups that don't agree with each other. But rather, they're two because the path, the method for arrival, is different. This is why the terms used in the teaching of Dzogchen, naypa, gyowa, rigpa, are today also used in Mahamudra, and these three principles are extremely important and must be understood for practice.

What does naypa mean? When a person is very agitated and confused in mind; and then body, voice and mind are all relaxed, above all the mind. You first of all let the mind go free. You don't start judging your thoughts. You don't create thoughts. You don't try to block thoughts. You let thoughts be. Whatever thoughts arise you let them remain in their condition. And we use what we call the example of the waves of the sea, which arise spontaneously, and whatever wave arises eventually disappears.

When you don't judge thoughts, you don't get involved in them and follow them. Any thought that arises, disappears of its own, and no problems come from it. So, relaxing the body, relaxing one's energy and mind, this way, letting be the thoughts that are, mind becomes slowly more and more relaxed. And one enters a state of calm in which even at times there is no thought at all.

But even if there is thought, the thoughts don't succeed in disturbing the individual. This is what we call the state of naypa or calm of mind. When one follows that state, one lets it be. When one examines it, one discovers that there is a presence, an awareness, even though there be no thought. When you follow a method of shinay, any method of shinay, it always takes you to this state. In the Sutras there is a description of how thought can be likened to an agitated wind-swept sea, which is all churning, and then slowly subsides into calm. And it is said that this is a state which takes you to true knowledge of shunyata.

Now, in Tantrism and in the Semde teachings of Dzogchen, this is understood as a method for arriving at the state of shinay, of calm of mind. But that's a first step. It's considered fundamental for agitated minds to find a bit of calm. But this is not considered, yet, a definitive state, an arrival point. This you can get to, being under a tree, calmly, if nobody bothers you.

But that's not the whole of our life. We have lots of other situations, and afterward one has to think about things. We have to move. And automatically, you come out of that state. And our condition when we come out of that state of calm no longer corresponds to shinay.

In the Sutras, how is this explained? In the Sutras this is explained as two faces of the situation contrasting, one being the relative truth and one being the absolute truth. When you start moving, you enter into worldly life. And in that condition, you'd better obey the rules, and do your best.

In Tantrism, on the other hand, all practice is done with movement. At least, it's understood that in visualization, the void is the beginning, but then there comes the element of wind, and then you visualize emerging from that all of the considerations of the mandala.

And so, when we do practice, here's the explanation of what we call gyowa, movement. When one is in the state of shinay, calm of mind, when there's a thought, thought is regulated, or governed, by certain positions, certain ways of fixing the mind, certain ways of fixing the attention. Through a fixation of attention, one becomes capable of regulating thought.

And then relaxing from that fixation, step by step, one becomes familiar with, accustomed to, thought, so that as a result one is not disturbed by thought. This means at most that one has stabilized that state of calm. It does not mean that you become capable of working with thought.

Now it's much more important to become able to work with this movement of mind and thought. That is, rather than arresting at the point of calm of mind, or stabilizing there, one goes on to deal with the movement of mind. This, we say, is the true lhagtong, that which is referred to by that name in the Sutras.

In the Dzogchen Semde series this is called migyowa. Migyowa means something that can't be moved, can't be disturbed or conditioned. That is, I don't have to be always silent, under a tree or in a cave. Though I have many thoughts, I live in movement, but I'm capable of integrating these thoughts and movements into my state of calm which is unwobbling. And this is how it's practiced in Tantrism. In Dzogchen we understand that there is a state of calm of mind, and then there is being able to work with movement.

But then, more important still is a third term, rigpa. This is precisely the state that we can find in contemplation. If one is capable of remaining in a state of calm of mind for long periods, for days and days uninterruptedly, yes, this is considered shinay, the state of calm.

But this is not yet a state of contemplation. Contemplation means integration, not only of the state of calm with its movement, with its moments of movement, the movement of mind, but with the presence - integration with the presence, the pure awareness, of whatever's happening. But this presence, or awareness, doesn't just mean that one isn't distracted, or sleepy.

Let us take this example: we're in a state of shinay, of calm, and while we're in this state of shinay, some birds are singing nearby. I don't follow that, but I hear it. Somebody is walking by, and I haven't actually looked at them, but I've automatically seen them. When I don't have this kind of noticing, it means the senses are blocked. It's as if one were asleep or befogged. When instead there is this kind of noticing, we say that the person is present. But thus far that presence or awareness is just the presence of the senses. This exists also when one is in the state of shinay.

So we haven't yet gotten to contemplation and the state of rigpa. When we say rigpa, we mean that there is more presence still, an immediate awareness, whether it be of

naypa, calm of mind, gyowa, movement of mind. If you don't understand this presence, then it will never become contemplation of Dzogchen. So that this is an important characteristic that makes it the contemplation of Dzogchen, and in Dzogchen we speak of bringing forth the state of rigpa in its nudity, absolutely naked.

Now it may be that a master or practitioner of Tantrism who has very much experience in his kind of practice, and has done much practice of the final states like Mahamudra, that he goes to a Dzogchen master. If he goes to a Dzogchen master to have some whispered teachings of still more essential character, he'll say "Would you give me something that's absolutely the essence, the core?" The Dzogchen master will know that that's a Tantric practitioner, will understand perfectly well his way of practicing, his outlook. What he'll say to him in a whisper, is how to bring forth the state of rigpa nude. This is particular to the teaching of Dzogchen.

But just mere words, mere slogan "Bring it forth, unadorned, totally naked" it's not enough, just having said that. Why isn't that easily understood, easily stated? Because the condition of contemplation can't be trapped in words. In the Longchen Nyingthig there's an invocation of zhi, lam, draybu, base, path and fruit. And it's said there that to explain these, even the tongue of the Buddha is inadequate. It's not that the tongue of the Buddha is weak or inadequate. It's that this is something which doesn't enter into the limitations of words and speech. So we're constantly trying to explain it, trying to make understood this indescribable.

In the Dzogchen Upadesha teachings, in the Drathaljur, there's an explanation of an introduction to the state of rigpa. That is, the method of introduction to the state of rigpa is explained in six ways:

[1] First, a thought arises. When you stop to observe this thought, and then you find that there's a state which can't be explained, there's nothing to explain. Because we've already said when you go to look for thought, when you go to look, for example, for the source of thought, what you find is void. And then you keep searching for the next thought that arises and the next one and you go through many of them.

But you continue to not find any definable source, or location for these thoughts. There's how that moment when you're not finding anything presents itself. There's a way in which a kind of emptiness presents itself, and there's a kind of perceiving, a kind of clarity or noticing, of this nothing. One finds nothing, and now a next thought arises. And there also is a notion arising at that point, "Well, I'm not finding anything." This, all this movement thus far described, is part of clarity.

But there's a continuous, like a returning wave, of nothingness, that you keep encountering. Because you're finding, nothing. This sort of clarity, and this sort of sense of nothingness, these are nyams, experience. This is experience. It's not a state. And yet, in all these moments, what we call the state of rigpa is present. In that moment that one keeps having this perceiving, or this awareness, this presence of these experiences, this is one way, through

perceiving the experiences, of noticing what that perceiving or noticing, which is rigpa, is. This is a method called zungwa (gzung-ba), which means to hold or to observe. It's not those nyams, but it's the noticing of those nyams which is the rigpa.

[2] Then there's another method which is called naypa. We've already used the term naypa to refer to something like the state of shinay, or calm of mind. Let's say one is not particularly observing one's thought. Even if the thought arises, it also departs. And then there's a kind of calm pause. And this calm pause is also characteristic of the nyams. For example, when we look at two thoughts, I think: "This tree, that man." Between these two thoughts there was a space of time, however short. Now, that time between the thoughts we do not call contemplation or rigpa. That's a nyam of the state of rigpa.

But in that moment, that noticing which is always present, that perceiving of that moment, that's rigpa. This is very important, and this is why this explanation is actually in the Tantra of Upadesha. My master, Changchub Dorje, based very much on this principle. We read many different texts of Dzogchen. We attend many different teachings of Dzogchen. We find that very very often many of them don't make this distinction. Many masters are a bit more generic and global. And they don't aim very much at the precise articulation of the state of rigpa. But it's very important. In the teaching of Dzogchen it's like the heart; it's the fundamental. So this naypa, also that naypa or calm between thoughts, is a nyam, is experience. But the awareness of it, or the noticing of it, that's rigpa.

[3] And there's a third, called dedpa ('ded-pa). Now you're working a bit with your mind. When a thought arises, or you see something, an object, and you go a little to look at its source - like that research into where it comes from, or how it arises, of which we've spoken - this gives a precise presence or sensation of void. It's as if you had the notion that there was something in a certain house and you might find it there. You're convinced there's something in there. You went in and looked and there was nothing. In that moment of "there is nothing", there's an experienced sensation of void, of nothingness.

I'll give an example. I put an object on a table. I put it there, I turn to take something else, and I need that object that I have put down on the table. When I return to it, it's not there. Somebody's taken it in the interim. That unforeseen, instantaneous sensation, is due to my having been convinced there was something there, and now there's nothing. It's not a reasoning, or thinking, but owing to my prior conviction, there's an impression or sensation of void.

And this sensation or impression, this experiencing of "there's nothing there", of void, that's also a nyam, nyam meaning an experience which is noticed, or which is experienced, through the state of rigpa. It's like a manifestation of, a reflection in the mirror. But you can't say that that reflection is the mirror's capacity to reflect. So in that moment of that experience, there is present, and noticing it, or experiencing it, through the state of rigpa.

Observe a little, try this, and you discover, experientially, what is the state of rigpa.

[4] And then there's another, the fourth of these. You go and eliminate things through thought. For example, you have sensory contact with objects. If you mentally enter into the object, it's just like the statement in the Buddhist Sutras of how shunyata can be objectively defined. It's said that there's a condition which exists as a result of elimination, and which can't be defined.

Let's say we're looking at an object here, this box. If while looking at it, it disappears slowly, what would my sensation be? This awareness of the dissolving also leads to an experiencing of a kind of sensation of void, of nothing. So it's very important here to go a little bit into practice. It's not a question of logic.

Some people when they explain this proceed very much through the logical matrices of the Sutras, and they describe disappearance into atoms, and successively smaller particles, and the like. It's true that that's how it works, but what's important here is not that analysis of the disappearance. What's important is how you get to the sensation or impression which is noticed or experience through rigpa.

This disappearance, this dissolving away of things through elimination, gives a sensation or an experience that's very similar to when we go to a merry-go-round - oh, like the experience of a roller-coaster - ah, it's like the tunnel of love, or the dark tunnel in which as you're going through there's a sudden startledness, something leaps up and you're startled. It's not the fear. But it's like a start, and it's if you'd had a sudden intake of breath. And there's a characteristic sensation of that jolt.

And that jolt is a kind of sensation of the nyam or experience of void. But since, in that moment, that nyam, there's an intensification, for an instant, of experience - in this case, the experience of nothing - therefore it's easier to derive or perceive that noticing of experience, that presence of experience, which is rigpa. And this way of finding or searching for rigpa is called tsawa chadpa (rtsa-ba gcad-pa).

[5] Then there's another, the fifth, which occurs when there is a contact between our senses and the object... [tape gap] ... nor do you particularly go into the object. But at the very instant of that contact, without going into it, you remain with the sheer presence of contact. That is, it's a state in which there's already been the contact: senses - object; and yet the senses haven't yet communicated that to the mind. In that split instant there's a sensation of clarity, an impression of clarity.

If you haven't understood well, we'll give an example. Sometimes these examples or illustrations complicate matters rather than clarify. I give a glance over there, and then swing the glance all the way back over here to [the painting of] Kuntuzangpo (kun-tu bzang-po). It's not just a flash of glance or gaze. It's actually a looking in which I pick up all the people. I can see everybody. That is to say, there is a contact between my seeing and the object.

But if I have to reason out who was sitting where, and

then there was the next person, and then came him and then came her, I'd have to do that afterwards with the mind. Because I can't do it instantaneously or simultaneously because the information is still coming to the mind, hasn't yet reached the mind. But there is, therefore, an awareness, a clarity, of contact. This clarity is still a nyam, a nyam of the state of rigpa. But during it, there is always a maximum presence of rigpa, or there'd be no noticing at all. So this is an example, I think, that's rather clear.

Then there's the last one. This one that Rinpoche just explained is called yul shaywar nay tsalwa (yul shes-bar nas brtsal ba). That is, during contact between subject and object, or during contact between senses and object, one finds rigpa.

[6] And then the last one, the sixth one, is called yengla borwa (yengs-la bor-ba). Yeng means, like one is distracted. It's not that you'd set out to distract yourself. You can also be distracted, and your attention is called back. Somebody wakes you up. But even if you're not distracted.

Let's say I'm in a state of shinay, of calm of mind, and at that moment there's a strong PHAT! There is a kind of jolt, jump. In that instant, and I've just sounded that strong PHAT!, there is a state which you can't explain. This state is called hadewa (had-de-ba), a state of startle. But that state of hadewa, that blank startle, is still a nyam. That's not rigpa. But in the moment that there's this hadewa, there's the noticing of it, and there's therefore always the state of rigpa, the pure perceiving present at that moment.

Now these are ways of explaining of giving a notion or an idea of rigpa. But nyams can present themselves in hundreds of ways. The nyam, experience, is not rigpa. Rigpa is always the presence, the noticing.

Now while we're talking quietly here, and suddenly a bomb goes off right there. Even those who aren't dead jump, or are flung. After a few seconds you say "Whew!, that was scary!" or "What a disaster", or whatever. That means that after a few seconds you've come back into functioning of mind. But while you are flying or jumping from the explosion, in that moment of startle, reasoning is not going on. Fear is what leads into the reasoning or thinking. In that moment of startle when you're jumping, that we call hadewa. If you haven't actually yet entered into a state of unconsciousness, of faint, then in that moment even of startle, there's still present the state of rigpa, of perceiving.

These examples of where you can find the rigpa, the perceiving, describe something which is the same as what we're talking about when we speak of nay, gyu, rig, of naypa, calm of mind, gyuwa, movement of mind, rigpa, the perceiving which is there in both cases. As we've said, in the teaching of Dzogchen we find everything as it is. And when we speak of things as they are, how it is, we're talking about our relative condition. All of our relative condition is linked with, is constituted by, our nyam, our experiencing. But in that state, laced through our experiencing, we always find that knowing, that perceiving, which is the state of rigpa.

Rigpa is the contrary of what we call marigpa. Marigpa is usually translated as ignorance. So that which is not

ignorance, that which is not unknowing, is the state of rigpa. But this term, rigpa, is a little different from what we call the nature of the mind. You have to understand that rigpa is a term that's used specifically in, and unique to, the teaching of Dzogchen, whereas the nature of the mind is a very general term, generally used term.

When one possesses a lived knowledge of, a real grasp of, this nature of the mind, that we call rigpa. Rigpa means a living knowledge, a lived and experienced knowledge. You find yourself in that knowledge, in that flash of knowing, and stay there. That's the state of contemplation. And that knowing, that state of knowing, contemplation, is laced right through, is integrated with, and calm of mind, absence of thought, and gyuwa, movement of thought and one's awareness. So as you can understand, rigpa is fundamental. In this case if you want to understand naypa or gyuwa as if they were separate, they're nyams of the state of rigpa.

There's a statement that's very very important here, of the Master Garab Dorje. He says "If thoughts arise, one liberates oneself finding oneself in that which arises." You don't have to negate or nullify. You don't have to block them or seek elsewhere a calm state. If one finds oneself in the liberation of these thoughts, then one finds oneself also in the presence of the state of which one is liberating oneself. There's no difference between the arising and the liberating oneself. Which means that what's most important is that "being present", that pure perceiving or presence.

The real meaning then of rigpa is this presence. But presence, felt awareness, is not enough - these words are not enough to make you understand it. You can be present, have presence and awareness through not being distracted. But to not be distracted also embraces the state of being concentrated on something, mentally at work. Now this is already something that's very valid and important in practicing Dzogchen in daily life. But that mindfulness is not the same as contemplation. The state of contemplation means living purely in the rigpa without being conditioned by anything, even a mindfulness of your situation, your daily events and so forth.

When we speak of introduction, introduction to the knowledge of the state of rigpa, what we're talking about is principally this. And all of the methods for getting to contemplation, the methods in Semde - we speak of the four samadhi; or the methods of Longde - the four da - all of these are methods for making contact with that pure presence or pure perceiving which is rigpa. That doesn't mean that rigpa is some kind of beatitude that we seek outside our normal condition.

We've pointed out, everyone of these explanations of rigpa is in combination with nyams, that is, experiencing. It's absolutely the same as, in order to understand the capacity of the mirror, you have to go through, deal with, the reflections. Yet you mustn't confuse the reflections with the capacity of the mirror to reflect. Because if you confuse those two, then you've lost the thread. Then you'll never find the capacity to reflect as such - of the mirror. If you don't find yourself in the capacity for reflection of the

mirror as such, then you can get lost in, and be governed by, and conditioned by, the reflections.

So, proceeding from the explanations, guided by them or facilitated by them, one has to try to acquire some familiarity with rigpa through practice, through experience. We just explained a system of six ways of finding rigpa, as given by the Drathaljur. It's not sufficient to parrot these six: "In the Drathaljur there are these six analyses and explanations, na na na..." It's not enough. What these are, are keys, indications, for doing some research with yourself, some inner work. Proceeding from these methods, or these insights, you can observe yourself a bit, and try to make contact with rigpa experientially, directly.

Many people when they hear this kind of explanation say "Oh, how boring, how complicated." Certainly it's complicated. It took the Buddha a hundred volumes of the Kanjur. That implies that it's pretty complicated. It's not so easy to do a digest of it. Other people say "Oh it's too difficult to do the practice. I just can't make it. I can't succeed."

When you push too hard to get to the bottom, it seems as if you just don't know how to proceed. You don't know which way to go. You can't even say "It's so difficult." But rather people, many times they don't say "It's so difficult", they say "I just don't know what to do." And in this case, in these cases, I much prefer that if we're going to teach Dzogchen, we just teach the Semde. In those cases, I say "Do this first, then do this, then do this other, and that's where you'll find such and so."

In the Upadesha teachings of Dzogchen on the other hand, we try to explain and introduce directly. It may be that somebody understood something and grasped something. Many may have not understood. Or they may have understood something merely intellectually. Or they've got this feeling they understood something. It seems they understood something. A couple of minutes later when they try to go into practice, zilch! And they start saying "Well, what do I do!" This is certainly true, because if you don't know right now what to do, you're going to be even worse off tomorrow, and even worse off after we've left.

You have to always remember that the Dzogchen teaching is a teaching that puts the responsibility right on the individual. It doesn't proceed in some limited way, saying "Do this, do that, do the other", like rules. The first thing is, try to find, for yourself, the knowledge. "Find the knowledge" means that you've had a direct experience. Otherwise it's not knowledge.

That way, through direct experience, you're not dependent on something or someone. And then things govern themselves, or are self-regulating. It means that you're not dependent on anybody. In the Dzogchen teaching we don't just talk about autonomy from objects or people, not being dependent on someone or something, we also talk about autonomy from, and not being dependent upon, the master. The master is important because he communicated and transmitted, and what he communicated and transmitted I've integrated into my knowledge.

But that doesn't mean that the master is some kind of

boss or chief, and I'm under him. Nor must the teaching become something that conditions the individual, a new excuse for not being autonomous. As regards realization, what the master does is he communicates the path to be followed. If I'm not to be conditioned even by the master and the teaching, imagine the degree of autonomy that I must attain in regard to all else.

It's said in general an individual's body is found on his bed. In his body lives his soul. This is a Tibetan proverb. A practitioner of Dzogchen has to be a bit like that, that is, someone who's capable of helping himself, who does his best, and above all, who knows himself, and knows what his real condition and situation is. Knowing this, having this knowledge of your situation, how you really are, you know other people. Then you can collaborate and help other people well. And from this derive collaboration, cooperation, helping, respect between people, and the like.

But when there isn't this knowledge right from the start, then you get a situation where today it seems like it's so much enthusiasm for things. But it's false. And the real situation behind that falsehood will manifest sooner or later. But if I leave things false, if I stay at the level of falsehood even if I know better, that's falsifying for myself, it's hoodwinking and duping myself. And fooling yourself is not helping yourself. So it's very important not to lie to yourself. It's very important to know how to help yourself.

If you want to do something of value for others, it's best not to start right away talking about others and how you're going to help them. First of all, observe yourself a little. Tibetans have a proverb: "the one who's helping the guy with a broken head is the one with the twisted neck." We're all so worried about other peoples' plight, when we're worse off than the other fellow. In which case it's not so easy to give somebody some help.

If you want to cure someone who's sick, it would be useful to understand just a little bit about diagnosis. And then a second phase, you intervene. But if you don't even understand what you're dealing with, to blunder right in and start helping is ridiculous. So it's very important to begin with yourself to really know what's going on. Very important to help yourself, to give yourself a helping hand. Knowing that the teaching is given so that you can help yourself, it's not given to condition and dominate individuals.

Then this knowledge of the state of rigpa can actually work in daily life. Then you begin to understand what you have to do. It's not that you have to recite a mantra. If you feel like it, you do it. Nor is it obligatory that you do yantra, or breathing, or specific movements. You try to find yourself in your knowledge, and how it can mature and ripen and become part of daily living.

The first thing that you learn in the Dzogchen teaching is knowledge. And this knowledge doesn't just remain intellectual, that is, abstract, just an idea. It becomes something concrete, through practice. And it's in practice, for example, that you try to find yourself in a state of contemplation. And we train ourselves through all the functioning, all the workings, of our senses. Through vision,

seeing; through sound, through hearing; and also through the functioning of the elements. We learn many many methods and how to apply them. And thus, without limiting ourselves, when there's a possibility of doing something, we're always ready.

For example if you have to go every day to work at the office, it means you don't have time to do yantra. You don't have time to sit in shinay, in a state of calm. So you find a way to practice non-distraction. If you're going to the office, and coming back from the office, it means you're walking. You're breathing. You can do some kind of practice like the reciting of the vajra.

It's not said that you have to do some particular thing. You can do this just walking while breathing. You're in an office and the work is very complicated. Your body is limited; you've got to be there. And respiration, breathing and mind are also limited by the fact that you're committed to the task you're engaged with. You can easily, very precisely there, train yourself in non-distraction. If you're not distracted, you can even do your work in the office better.

But that also is very favorable for our practice of contemplation. And if one trains one's contemplation a bit by doing occasional retreat, probably you've also got the capacity to integrate contemplation a little with movement and work. So in this way, day by day, you slowly better your condition. Thus, if one observes a little our condition, what we actually are doing in our situation, you can integrate a little all of the different practices you've learned, inserting each one where appropriate or possible.

So this is why the Dzogchen teaching is constantly urging us to not box ourselves in too much in life, not limit ourselves. Also as regards practice, if you limit yourself, box it and compartment it too much, you're making a great error. Practice is a readiness to do what one can, when one can, giving yourself plenty of room. There are people who one day, that day, they don't feel like practice. They say "Oh my god, what a disaster, today I don't succeed in practice." No harm if you don't practice one day. Or two days. Or three days. It's not the end of the world.

Much more important that one not live negligently or not be indifferent about this, or lost in distraction. There are systems of teaching that urge you to struggle with your laziness or your lack of diligence. But the Dzogchen teaching doesn't teach that. Rather, it urges you to be aware, to be present, and to train yourself not to be distracted. Laziness comes from distraction. If you're aware, and mindful, if you're self-observing, then if there is not the impulse today, it will come tomorrow, out of your awareness of need.

Today I don't feel like practicing. There's a reason; there's some motive; something that's stopping me. For example, I've got to copy a book. Let's say there are a hundred pages in the book. Let's say I've copied twenty pages. I'm a bit tired. I start making errors. If I insist at that point, my handwriting degenerates, becomes uglier or less readable, and I start making mistake after mistake. Even if I force myself, I force another hour of work out of myself. Let's say with all the errors I've written ten pages, with a big effort.

If instead I just drop it at that moment when I don't feel like doing it, and take myself a nice walk, then because I've left myself a little space, a little rest, and then when I feel like it again I come back to writing, those ten pages will take me not an hour but a quarter of an hour. And I won't have made any of those errors, not even one. This is really how it is, how it often works.

So practice means also working with our actual condition. Somebody who insists so that he blocks himself is not going to get any development or progress. Above all, he's going to damage and block his own progress. So one has to very aware of oneself. So no harm is done if sometimes one doesn't practice. But one never just neglects that and lives indifferently.

But if one really likes this, and adopts this theory as a program, giving myself plenty of room, and justifies oneself: "Well, the Dzogchen teaching says: Give yourself plenty of room. I don't want to insist and force myself, because I'm a Dzogchen practitioner." Thus, you live in total distraction today. Tomorrow you're still distracted. So instead of developing your presence and awareness of the state of rigpa, you're instead making progress in distraction. Then, Dzogchen doesn't work at all. In that case, Dzogchen just becomes a word, a title you're giving yourself. This is why we're told again and again that we have to observe ourselves and know what we're up to, and know what we are. And we're finished now.

[Afterwards Rinpoche wrote out the Tibetan for these six methods as follows: the six nayla tenpa (gnad-la brten-pa): zungwa (gzung-ba), naypa (gnas-pa), dedpa ('ded-pa), tsawa chadpa (rtsa-ba gcad-pa), yul shaywar nay tsalwa (yul shes-bar nas brtsal-ba), yengla borwa (yengs-la bor-ba).]

[Thursday afternoon, 22-Jul-82]

Now we'll explain a bit about the practice of the night. Many of the older students, those who have been students longer, know of this. I'm explaining this above all for the new people. But I don't know if the older ones have got this so well in practice or not.

The principle in the Dzogchen teaching is full time practice. Now in this case what we're aware of is that time is divided between day and night. Half of our life we spend at night. In that case practicing at night is very important. We have to know how to do that. And you have to actually do the practice.

Now in general we speak a great deal about the bardo state. And many today read the Tibetan Book of the Dead, the Bardo Thodrol (bar-do thos-grol). And many people read it. And it seems almost like a story, a fable, about what happens after death. But this is actually about a condition which is true not just if you die, but which is always the case. So one has to know in principle, all that's discussed in the Bardo, also in terms of its relevance or meaning for life.

And then this too has its meaning for practicing, to be carried into practice. This has to do with one of the practices that we do at night. In the Dzogchen teaching the principal night time practice of which we speak is the practice of the natural light. It's important here to understand how we can divide the period between falling asleep and waking up, into what phases it's divided.

When one falls asleep, at that point the senses are no longer at work. Not only are the senses not functioning but the mind is not at work. And this is what we call "someone being asleep". From this point until the person begins to dream, we call that "the state of the natural light". When one begins to dream, now we call that "the state of dream". Because that means that the mind is beginning to work again. Then at a certain point one awakens and at that point this state of sleep is ended. Then one is in the day state or waking state.

Then once again after the waking state or day state one goes to sleep, one dreams, one reawakens. This cycle continues every day. And this continuous cycle is parallel to the continuous cycle of transmigration. When one dies, all of the senses vanish. There's no longer awareness. There's no longer the functioning of the senses. And we say "that person is dead". This, after the senses cease to function, we call the state of light.

In Tantrism they explain a succession of different lights in that state. But this is not some light that functions through the mind and its reasoning. It's the situation or condition which manifests itself. And that's called the chonyid bardo (chos-nyid bar-do), the bardo of the Dharmata of anything which occurs.

This state can be explained in many different ways. What occurs depends very much on whether an individual has had in life some experience of practice. An individual who has had an experience of practice such as that of Dzogchen, then when he experiences the last of these successive stages of life, this is called lhundrub, the state of self-perfectedness. In

that moment occurs a true recognition of all that which had been known in life through practice.

In the person's life a master had transmitted knowledge of the state of rigpa for example. If one had had a bit of experience of that in life, then that experience which one had had due to transmission in life we call the son, that is, S O N light. Then when one finds oneself in the state of lhundrub, in the condition of lhundrub, in the bardo of the Dharmata comes a manifesting of the quality of this condition as it truly is.

And what happens is a recognition of the perfection of that which one had previously experienced in part. And this perfection of the light is what's called the mother wisdom. One encounters and recognizes this mother wisdom through one's prior experience of what is called the son wisdom. And this is called the meeting of the mother wisdom and the son wisdom.

Similarly in Tantrism, even if in life one had not totally realized, that is, made real the transformation, one's experience of transformation will realize itself, will become real, in this bardo of the Dharmata. This bardo of that which is, is the state of the actual condition of the individual as is. It's not the result of, or it's not an occurring of, any kind of mental labor.

If one has no experience in life, one nonetheless has, every individual must have, a condition of self-perfectedness of that person as an individual. And therefore there always must exist a passage through this natural light. But it's not that the natural light is striking or recognizable in some extraordinary way. One's capacity to recognize it is linked to, and that state is itself corresponding to, the state of natural light which we experience or which exists every night between the falling asleep and the beginning of dream.

Of course a person who has no experience, who is not forewarned, falls asleep. Next thing that person knows is that they're dreaming. They haven't noticed anything in between. For such a person who isn't informed and prepared, the same thing can happen after death, that they notice nothing between the dying and the reawakening of senses and mind, that they pass through the state of natural light without anything occurring. So it can be useful, very useful, for someone to have read during their life something like the Book of the Dead.

After this bardo of the Dharmata, then the next phase which begins, if one continues to it, is the bardo of existence. That's the one that's very famous as "the bardo". This exactly corresponds to when we're sleeping, and after a certain point, entering into the state of dream. In dream, we find many beautiful things, many ugly things, whatever occurs. And this state of dream continues until we awaken. When we awaken, that corresponds to emerging from the bardo of existence into another karmic vision, another rebirth.

So this practice of the night is very important also in order to have appropriate orientation and real presence, awareness, and recognition when one dies. It's very important to, through this practice, to have a real knowledge of, a lived knowledge and experience of, the genuine condition of the individual, that which the individual is, obtainable

during the bardo of the Dharmata, that is, the bardo of that which is, which actually is.

It's customary that a master be invited for example to provide an introduction to the bardo, read from the Book of the Dead, when an individual has died. A master can always attempt to intervene. But there's no guarantee that the person who's died will take notice, and assimilate what's been communicated. How much more important to prepare oneself while still alive, while one has the opportunity rather than wasting one's time.

And then since this practice of the night takes place during the period of sleep, nobody can say that they're too busy, that they haven't got any time for it. If you're asked to do a retreat of three years, you can say that you're in no position to do that. But we're all free at night, pretty much. It's sufficient that there be a minimum of participation, of intention, and that one doesn't permit oneself to be distracted.

Then there's a principle involved in this practice that can be illustrated this way. There are people who try to do this practice one night, two nights. Let's say the first week they're making the attempt. And it appears that they don't succeed. Or it goes all wrong somehow. And they decide or say "This is just a practice that I'm not able to do." And then they drop it and remain indifferent in that regard.

This is something extremely serious for a practitioner. Because we're going to continue to sleep and sleep until death. And no one of us knows how many years that involves. In any case there's no point planning on neglecting the nights that remain to us. This is very important, that one should not be indifferent or neglectful in this regard.

As we've said always, whatever practice one may be doing, one must never force oneself. But if you don't succeed for a week or two weeks, that doesn't mean anything. If you have to rest, that is, do without it even for some months, that's all right. But to decide not to do the practice for a couple of months is not the same as giving it up for life. You have to understand that this practice is very very important.

In regard to this practice one has to understand two fundamental things. As regards practices of Tantrism, in Tantrism there's much said about the practice of dreams. But in Dzogchen teaching, the dream yoga is a very very secondary practice. Because lucidity in dreams must come if one is aware. Because dream practice is aimed at being aware of dreaming while dreaming. Dream practice is not merely for interpreting what the dream means. One can interpret dreams as much as one likes.

In general interpretation of dreams are made according to what people believe. Interpretations of dreams for the most part are linked to people's experience. And this is transmitted and becomes something common, or collective. For example, if someone says "I dreamed that my teeth were falling out." And then someone else says "I dreamed that my teeth were falling out. My father died." That's an unfortunate dream. A person fixes on that and that can occur again. And this now becomes part of a commonly accepted kind of dream vocabulary that when one dreams of teeth falling out, one's father will

die. This is a belief.

But it doesn't always work out that way. Because there are people who may never have thought of it that way, and who may give it an exactly contrary interpretation. When people are fixed on something, then that tends to become the case. ... [tape gap] ... If I'm convinced that to dream of teeth falling out is certainly and unquestionably a misfortune, an unhappy dream, through my conviction that becomes a part of my culture, my outlook, my view. And in general, codes of dream interpretations have arisen in this way.

But in regard to dream one must understand that not all dreams are the same. Some dreams at times come from clarity. There are many dreams where we find the signs of practice manifesting themselves. Many nyams of the development of practice can be understood through dreams. Why? Because these emerge through our clarity.

But there are many dreams which arise either through our preoccupation, or anxiety, or above all, from karmic traces and imprints. As this is explained in Tantrism. At times dreams arise from bodily locations, and the principal cause is that prana has accumulated at those bodily locations. And this, according to Tantrism, is part of a linkage or correspondence between the external and internal worlds. So there are many, many ways of interpreting dreams.

But when we speak of dream practice, this is not what we are primarily talking about. If one is dreaming a dream of clarity, one can quite easily recognize that. But a practitioner is a person who is not conditioned by dreams either. Rather, dreams represent a means or an instrument for discovering irreality, the illusory nature of things. When we say that the relative condition is like the reflections in the mirror, the reflections in the mirror are only one example of this irreality. The dream is another example of unreality that's much used. So dream practice is not just about interpreting dreams.

The principle and the point of the practice of dreams is to become aware of dreaming while dreaming. That is, I'm perfectly lucid about it. I know I'm dreaming as I dream. In this case I have the capacity to adjust, correct, change and transform my dreams. And why people practice dream yoga, the point of it, is to obtain this recognition in dream of dreaming.

Obviously, before recognizing dreams one important stage is remembering dreams. If a person has the impression of not dreaming each and every night, there isn't much to do about recognizing dreams. It may seem in many cases that one doesn't dream. But no such phenomenon exists. There is no individual who doesn't dream. We can be a few minutes, a quarter of an hour, a half hour, for none of us does that time pass without a thought coming.

Yes, there's a level of realization when one has transcended this and the dreaming does not come as a normal matter. But that doesn't mean that people in general cannot dream. We mustn't confuse these matters. We've said earlier, a person who is realizing himself knows perfectly well that he is doing so, that he's realized.

Rather, this sense of not dreaming means that one doesn't

remember what one has dreamed, above all someone who has slept rather heavily. Or there's some other specific cause for this impression that one has not dreamed. In that case one does well first of all to try to remember one's dreams. And when one does the practice of dreams, there are many means to identify the cause of this forgetfulness.

The cause can be one's diet, what one has eaten. The cause can be overwork and resulting physical strain. At times this can be resolved through breathing, at times through a change of diet. Or it can be a change in the place where one sleeps. The motive for forgetfulness may be the way one sleeps. There are many many factors. Examining the matter a bit, one can resolve the problem. There's also the way in which the mind finds itself at the moment of falling asleep. Applying these methods, at a certain point one gains complete memory of dreams.

But in the teaching of Dzogchen, the night practice at which one aims above all is that of the natural light. When one has presence, immediate awareness, during the period of natural light, then when the dream comes, automatically it will be lucid, and aware. Equally, the clarity of the dream that is, its being an expression of clarity, and the capacity to remember dream, will also arise automatically. Therefore the practice of the natural light becomes fundamental.

Remember that the natural light refers to the period between falling asleep and the beginning of dream. If one is aware and present during the state of natural light, if one is aware of the state of natural light, that automatically governs the state of dream.

What does one have to do to do the practice of the natural light? First of all one has to know oneself a bit. And one has to know a bit about how one sleeps. "What type of sleeper am I? Am I the type of person for whom sleep comes with difficulty at night? Or am I a person who as soon as I'm in bed, I'm asleep like a stone. Or am I the kind of person who needs two or three pills to get to sleep?"

There are many people today who require medicines to sleep. Not all these different types of people are in the same situation. Certainly practicing the presence of the natural light is not a way of not sleeping at night. Sleeping the night, which not only means bodily rest but also relaxation and deep repose of the mind, is fundamental in life. So one has to be rather expert about oneself and one's situation to give oneself this.

Now let's take a person who remains awake for a long time and gets to sleep with difficulty. A person who at the extreme requires some pills even to sleep a few hours. It's not going to be easy for such a person to do a night practice. Because the effect of the pills will be to make this person as unconscious as a stone until a certain point. And then they awaken. Moreover taking such medicines again and again for years and years, this worsens the condition.

So what must such a person do, this type of person, in order to practice the night? First such a person must prepare him or herself for night practice, and is going to have to resolve the problem of sleep. They have to search out the principle or the cause here. The larger number of these

people are very nervous. They have to look into this in order to overcome this condition. And obviously they must, as always, work with body, with voice, and with mind. Because this person who suffers from sleeplessness is obviously someone, by necessity, who exists in these three ways.

And so the person must above all harmonize and coordinate his energy. But it's insufficient to balance one's energies simply by going to a doctor two or three times for acupuncture. One has to help oneself a bit, if necessary by doing some movements and taking physical positions. Through this and through the relevant breathing, one harmonizes one's energy and makes it function appropriately. At this point one can bring some relaxation to the mind.

And at this point one can begin to substitute a more natural type of medicine for that which one has been using. I say this because someone who has long been habituated to this type of pill can't simply drop all medicines in one moment. Rather than an abrupt break, they have to diminish the dosage and also shift to a more natural type of medicine.

There's medicine that's for example, Tibetan medicine. One of the best medicines in this regard is something called the 23 ingredients of aggar ??, the 35 ingredients of aggar. And there's another medicine called Vimala. You're aware that there was a very famous master of Dzogchen called Vimalamitra. That makes it easy to remember the name of this medicine, because this medicine derives from the method of Vimalamitra, for which reason the medicine itself is called Vimala. You can ask for these medicines from a Tibetan doctor.

With these medicines and accompanying them with appropriate breathing, one can begin to give up the sleeping potions, tranquilizers, and similar medicines that one has been using. These are natural medicines, and if at any time one wants to give them up, there are no unfortunate side effects. It's best to continue using them until the effects of the medicines that previously had been taken are completely gone. In this case one would find a natural way of sleeping.

This is very important even if you don't then proceed to do night practice. You've at least begun to sleep as you should. Otherwise your nervous state will continuously develop and intensify. Presumably many of you don't have this problem. You may be thinking "Of what possible interest is all this to me?" But it is in your interest. It's important to know this. It's important to know how to do this.

Then there's the second category of people who don't normally have trouble sleeping, but if they start to do visualizations at bed time, and work the mind, then they have trouble sleeping. It's very true that one can easily provoke sleeplessness. A person who has, let us say, no problem normally in sleeping, a person who might think to himself before going to sleep "How strange that there are people who have difficulty in getting to sleep" and he begins to think "How would it be if to me sleeplessness came this night?" If he begins to work that thought over a little, he can easily spend a sleepless night even though he's usually normal. Because there's actually a way of provoking insomnia.

So one sets out to do night practice, thinking to oneself "Now I've finally understood how you do this." Instead of

practicing, you spend three or four nights without sleeping. After a few weeks you can't even think about that practice. And sometimes this too can happen. So one has to understand and a little bit know oneself.

Therefore there are different methods for doing this practice. A person who believes that minimally he can provoke sleeplessness, mustn't fix too acutely on the night practice when going to bed, nor plan too much, but rather, finding him or herself in bed, must simply observe what occurs in the mind. Some thoughts are sure to come before sleep arrives. One doesn't think about them nor judge them, nor get involved in the problems that may come to mind.

But whatever thought arises, one observes the condition of that thought as such. Whatever thought comes, whatever thought continues, whatever thought changes, one continues to observe and with this sense of observation, presence of observation, one falls into sleep.

Those who haven't tried this shouldn't imagine that it's so very easy. Because it's not in fact extremely simple. There's a necessity to make a habit of it a bit. But on the other hand, it's not so very difficult. One practices it. One stays with it. One surely will succeed. As we've already said, what's important is to not just neglect this matter. One succeeds then in falling asleep in this way and in doing the practice, one night, two nights, some nights. I'm not saying every night. It gradually becomes familiar.

Our daytime experience of contemplation also facilitates this presence or immediate awareness in the moment of falling into sleep. And just as in reverse, developing this presence or sense of awareness can take one, can be taken back, into contemplation. If one fades into sleep with this presence, this sense of awareness, or in the state of contemplation, then quite surely one's sleep and dream will be lucid and aware. In this case there's no need to do any special or particular practice.

If on the other hand, one has no problem whatsoever in falling asleep, and on the contrary, one is someone who easily and all too easily falls asleep, it's very easy before falling asleep to visualize a white AH at the center of the body. If the white AH is too luminous, too bright, and interferes with falling asleep, you can also concentrate on a five-colored thigle or sphere. The awareness or sense, the presence, of this thigle or of this white AH, should then gradually be relaxed. You release the tension, the attention, of that, and try to fade into sleep. This has the same result because this carries on into presence or awareness.

To have still more presence or clarity, there is a concentration on a chain of AHs moving from that central AH just before sleep. From a white AH at the center of the body arises a second AH, from which arises a third AH, from which arises a fourth AH, producing a chain of AHs that go up the central channel to the crown of the head, then they return down, telescoping one into the prior, until this reunites or reabsorbs into the central AH. You once again continue this up and down another three or four times. At the end of which you fix on the central AH, remembering to relax from it and fade into sleep.

As we've said, if someone has a problem falling asleep, this type of practice of a chain of AHs can be done a bit before going to bed. Because this practice very much facilitates presence, awareness, clarity. And then in the moment in bed of falling asleep, one would try to make contact with the presence, the awareness, of whatever thoughts arise, as described earlier.

If one does not have particularly clear dreams or doesn't have the ease of recollecting dreams, then there's a way of visualizing or concentrating on a red AH in the throat. You'll recall that the red AH is always the symbol of energy. And this is in order to concentrate one's energy a bit. And this helps very much to clarify dreams.

But then we've already said that the principal element in remembering dreams and in the clarity of dreams is our behaviour, our daytime behaviour. It's better to go to sleep for example without a stomach that's too full. It's better to sleep not drunk. It's as well to go to bed having just taken a good bath, having done some movements and some breathing, and to go to sleep not when one is overtired and utterly exhausted. It's as well to go to sleep in a place that's pleasant, and not in too deep a darkness. And it's as well not to be completely covered, or have the covers pulled over your head. It's as well not to have too soft a pillow.

All these are ways of facilitating a lighter sleep. Lighter sleep helps one have easier recollection of dreams. Lighter sleep, promoting a greater degree of presence or awareness, also facilitates having a lucid dream, a dream in which one is aware of dreaming. It's usually said that at night when one goes to sleep, the dreams that first arise are all dreams coming from one's traces and karmic imprints. And the motivation, in this case the reason is that one is sleeping heavily.

Then on the other hand, towards morning, as one moves not into sleep but into wakefulness, a person is already almost ready to awaken. When one is in that state where if there's some noise one can easily be awakened by it, this means of course that one is sleeping lightly. In that moment when one has more awareness, more presence, if dreams come, it's considered that they're more significant because they're more likely dreams of clarity.

In any case a practitioner has at a certain point dreams of awareness. So when you have lucid dreams, dreams in which you're aware of dreaming, what do you do? If you have awareness of dreaming in dreams, then you can use your dreams also to facilitate your daytime practice. There are many things of which we have a notion but that are limited by the physical reality of the day. But since the situation in dreams is altogether other, one can apply these ideas, transformation for example, very, very readily.

And this is true also for many types of practice like that practice in the Dzogchen Upadesha which is called thogay (thod-rgal). It's very possible to have the thogay visions in dreams. One can have much readier and deeper development of this in dream than in daytime waking. But all this presupposes that one has awareness of dreaming while dreaming.

Moreover through dreaming one can obtain diminution of

attachment in the day. Because our dreams are also capable of influencing our daytime life. It doesn't mean that one begins to neglect daily living and spend his time dreaming, because in principle these are one and the same thing. Daytime wakefulness is one big dream. Dreams of the night are little dreams.

Life itself is one long dream. The truth is that when we die and our human karmic vision is over, we wake up to the fact that it was only a dream and was not real. So, that which we consider reality, this karmic vision, is considered so only until we die. The wonderful taste of summer grass is something for a cow. And so long as the cow is a cow, it appreciates that, that taste. But when it ceases to be a cow, it loses its taste for that taste.

A rooster has no need of a watch to crow at the appropriate hour of the morning. But this consciousness of time and capacity to find the right moment, only lasts as long as it's a rooster. But when it ceases to be a rooster, it loses this capacity and time consciousness.

So we think our life is so very real. But the truth is it only lasts as long as we're human beings. And this is true for the dream. Let us say I begin to dream and I find some unpleasant antipathetic person before me. He says something offensive to me. And I become angry. I might physically get into that situation and punch that man. If I was unfortunate enough to be sleeping next to the window, I find I've driven my fist through it. And I wake up because things are happening.

At that point I grasp that I've been dreaming. The flavor of the dream, the quality of the dream, has ended there because I've awakened. Until that moment of awakening, that dream was for me perfectly real. In the dream the dream has its own dimension and condition of reality. So, to become aware while dreaming that one is dreaming, means that this is a means for becoming aware of the dream we're living in daily life. So this mastery of dream is very much used to bring awareness and knowledge into our daily waking living.

There are Tantras like that of the Mahamaya for example, where the principal method utilized is that of dream yoga. Through knowledge of dream, one enters into a true understanding of the illusory. So the function of dream in practice is like that. It's not that one becomes aware of dreaming just to harm others, although this can in fact be done, be applied, if one has acquired mastery of awareness in dreams. Things can actually be affected. For example, how many masters have reported how in dream, given mastery of dream, they were able to travel, to visit other masters, to receive teachings, and the like.

I think many of you may have some experience of having at one time or another been aware of dreaming while dreaming. And usually it succeeds when you dream something terrible, when you have a nightmare. Right at the desperate or most dangerous moment, it happens that you realize that you're only dreaming. And yet you've not yet awakened. And you may actually continue the dream. And you may slip right back into not recognizing that you're dreaming. This can come about naturally.

But when we practice, we're no longer waiting for it to happen by chance. Through practice we acquire mastery. One begins to dream and one knows that one is dreaming. One wants to change the dream. One has the capacity to change it. This is a matter of training. In dream we speak of jangpelgyur (byang-spel-'gyur) just like in the chod. Jang here doesn't mean to purify exactly. Jang means to train. One trains oneself to have this awareness or this presence of one's knowledge, knowledgeableness about the dream.

Pel means to multiply. Let's say I'm dreaming, and I'm aware that I'm dreaming. And I continue the dream to see what's there. I may decide for example to start the dream up again at a further moment, not just once, but I can continue it again and continue it again and continue it again, many times. This is not within a deadline of some months. But man always has a memory.

For example, I was in Tibet twenty years ago. It's not that I dream of how things were at that time or how I was at that time. That we call the trace or imprint. But rather I remember a dream that I dreamed at that time. Let's say that that same dream repeated itself when I was in India. And let's say that that dream continues to repeat itself or reoccur every so often now. And I ask myself "Now, why does this dream keep repeating?" Because if you possess awareness while dreaming, you always in the dream remember your dreams.

So now I want to know what lies beneath that dream that's reoccurred. I can re-dream it and I can examine every branch and avenue and variant of that dream in order to understand it. Obviously I can't do it all tonight. I can pick up on the job the night after next. If I possess this awareness, this knowledgeableness, as soon as I find myself dreaming, I have the consciousness that I'm dreaming and I decide to access that dream. This is called pelwa (spel-ba), the way of multiplying dream.

Then there's a great deal of what we call transforming in dream. Let's say I dream something horrible. I turn it into something beautiful. It may be something beautiful and I'd like to transform it into something else. This comes when one has very much become a master of dreams. It's not always easy to transform dreams. But the capacity to transform dream also means putting into action a bit of breaking of our limitations and habits.

For me there's only one person who is me. I'm a human being. And that's a limitation of mine. How can I produce two Norbus? How can I have two Norbus functioning simultaneously? This would be getting out of my limitations. But if you have the capacity to transform dream, this becomes completely possible. And you can train yourself in it. So in this sense there are many, many ways of using the dream with the capacity to change it, to train yourself in going outside our limitations.

All of this of course presupposes first of all, awareness of dream. And becoming aware of dream also characteristically implies development of clarity. But not only in dream, there are many ways in which clarity as a result will manifest in general. Because a human being in general possesses his intrinsic qualifications or characteristics which we've called

essence, nature, energy. But we always live in the conditioning of the mind. We do all of our reasoning and thinking. We never permit our clarity to manifest itself.

For example somebody's playing at cards. He doesn't know how to proceed. He's about to do something, to make a move. He stops himself "No that's not right. I'd better re-think that. And why isn't that the right move? Because so and so dealt that card, because he did this, because the other one did that other thing." And now he's thought it through perfectly. He makes his move - wrong! And he says "If only I'd made that very first move that came to me intuitively, I would have won."

I don't say that it's always like that. But it happens that very, very often that what spontaneously arises is clarity, and that one doesn't permit oneself to act on it. This is one example of our characteristic way of being. In short we almost never allow our clarity to work. And now the explanation is finished.

[Friday morning, 23-Jul-82]

We can notice one thing in general. When a master gives a teaching, how he presents himself, what he does, how he sits, there's a system which is generally used. Many of you surely don't know this. I'm not saying that the principle is like sitting in a temple or a church. But wherever a teaching is being given, people are seated, kind of accumulated together.

But between those who listen and he who explains, there's a bit of space. Why? If you were to read the book of Patrul Rinpoche (dpal-sprul rin-po-che), Kunzang Lamay Zhalung (kun-bzang bla-ma'i zhal-lung), you'd see that there's a principle at work. Whoever is giving a teaching always has an intention and an awareness of making a gift of the teaching, of offering the teaching. But this principle is not limited to giving the teaching to the persons there present. A bit of space is also left for the others. There's space left at a distance and there's space left nearby. This is the tradition that prevailed for the giving of teaching.

There's also another principle. In general when a master gives teaching, they're squeezed up near him, those who have had more contact with him, his disciples, his students. Let's say he's always surrounded by the same group of people. They never allow any room for a new person. Or they never open or make way for someone who's a bit timid about coming close. Those who are always nearby don't notice anything. Those who are kept back notice it very clearly. And these are things that must be understood a bit. And above all, the older students must make way for the new ones.

I say this again and again, because I notice always that it seems to occur automatically that there's this situation. When we start to criticize somebody, it's very easy to notice it. If one has to approach somebody who's in a very good position, a politician, there's always a bureaucracy between one and that person in high position. That person of high rank or high position is always controlled by three or four grades of people between him and ordinary others. This is fine for somebody who has political position like the Dalai Lama, for example.

But if one considers himself a teacher who must cooperate with, and help, his students, the master has to have contact with his individual disciples. If he is always surrounded by a group of people, how can that possibly occur? If somebody wants to ask something, if somebody wants to say a few words to the master, how can it possibly take place if he's always controlled and guarded by the same set of people? This is something of which we have to be conscious and knowledgeable. This is rather important and it's something to keep noticing at every moment.

And then as we've already spoken of the base and the path, but I'm going to give a little summary once more. Because people who've just newly arrived may have no notion of this. The principle of the teaching is always based on the base, the path, and the fruit or realization. Above all in the Dzogchen teachings, it's extremely important to understand this summary.

The path of the Dzogchen teaching is always the path

which is called the path of self-liberation. Self-liberation, why? Because there's the principle that all is already self-perfected. There's nothing that has to be constructed or produced. Since nothing has to be added, it's sufficient that one find oneself in the lived knowledge of that which is, of that which one is. And when one finds oneself in this condition, situation of what one is, this we call self-liberation. Therefore it's very important that one know what one is and how things are. And this is the base.

The base is that which we call the state of the individual as such. We can raise a question "What is an individual?" The primordial state of the individual is explained through essence, nature and energy. And when we speak of energy, it's from its working that there arises all that we call the relative situation or condition. For example in Sutric Buddhism it's said that the base is the union of the two truths.

Now instead we're saying that the base is the primordial state of the individual as such. The way of seeing from the beginning, from bottom, is a bit different. What we call the relative situation is like a characteristic or qualification, of the individual. It's not something opposed to, contrary to, what we call the absolute condition.

What is the essence? We illustrate this by saying when we look into a thought, we look to its origins, its location, what we find is nothing at all. And this "nothing at all" is the essence. We give the example of the thought because from thought comes everything. Even though we find nothing is there, we find that thought keeps arising and everything keeps happening and this we call the nature.

This nature possesses a way of working, a way of functioning. And this functioning we call energy. The ways in which energy manifests are three and we call them tsal (rtsal), dang (sdangs), rolpa. One way is the manifestation of energy as apparently the objective, the other, and this is like striking a crystal, and from the crystal its energy appears as colors on the wall or moving outside.

In this analogy the crystal is like our underlying state. And the light which appears to be outside it is how our energy is manifesting in that mode. This apparently external manifestation of energy is what we call tsal. On this level when there appear visions such as color that is appearance of what we call essence of the elements, we call that pure vision.

When that becomes more a karmic vision, that is, takes on materiality, we call that impure vision. That is, it hardens and becomes something resistant and condensed just as water becomes ice. For which reason all six of the visions of the six lokas are samsaric vision, the basis of which always comes from us ourselves. It's not the same as in unexpected or a sudden vision of some kind that we call a nyam. As we've said, a karmic vision solidifies as if into ice, because there's a precise cause. So long as this karma exists, there will also exist its concrete result.

A second mode in which energy exists is called rolpa. And here we use the example of the mirror. The mirror can reflect beautiful things or ugly ones. Here we're using the

mirror as analogous to our state. And this way of manifesting in the mirror not outside it as if external, that we call rolpa. For example yesterday we spoke of the state of dreams. We spoke of the manifestation of light in the bardo of the Dharmata. All this is aspects of the functioning of rolpa.

And above all when one practices on the path of transformation, we follow the example of some transformation which has manifested. For example, I'm seated in my place and visualizing infinite mandalas. At a certain point I realize that, and it actually manifests so for me. This is the way, a way, of applying. And the result of applying the energy we call rolpa.

Then thirdly there's the way of manifesting of energy which we call dang. And this is the characteristic of energy which is manifesting its very condition. It's not that something is manifesting dualistically. But there comes about a direct contact with energy. And this is best understood, or most easily understood, in the case of sound. Through sound you can understand what's being communicated. Or we use the example of a vibration when one is aware of, has the presence of, that vibration.

These we call the ways in which energy function. These three - essence, nature, and energy - are called the three primordial wisdoms. We speak of wisdoms as qualifications, characteristics, of the underlying state. Why do we say primordial wisdoms? Because there's nothing here that has to be newly constructed or added. That is the condition. That is the case. This is the state of the individual. From the beginning it has been like that.

When we speak of the state of realization, these three aspects that we've analyzed manifest themselves explicitly as what we call the three bodies. And the path consists of entering into these three, working with, and applying, these three, and ultimately realizing or making them manifest.

What we spoke of yesterday, the famous naypa, gyuwa, and rigpa, help us enter into knowledge of contemplation. That is to say, help us with the utilization or the entering into greater knowledge of essence, nature and energy. So also when we speak of nyams and how they manifest, these two are always linked with the the characteristics of the essence, the nature, and the energy. Therefore these are the basis of everything.

And these are indeed the base, and we call them the base, the base of realization, the basis of the path, the basis above all, of the state of the individual. But what is there to do with this base? First of all, one has to understand it. And one does this also through practice. To practice is to apply the path. But to apply the path you must have knowledge of the base. Otherwise you don't know how to proceed. And this is another reason we call the base "the base".

After this comes the path. The path too in principle has three aspects, three fundamental aspects. There's the way of seeing, the tawa (lta-ba). There's gompa (bsgom-pa) or practice, and how the practice is done, is put into action, is carried out. Lastly we speak of chopa (spyod-pa), or attitude and behaviour, how one applies one's practice in daily life. And these are the three principal considerations of the path.

The first of these, the tawa, the way of seeing, is a way to understand well what practice is, and is about. In the Dzogchen teaching, tawa is in no sense considered what might be defined as philosophy. Whoever follows a school or tradition is always accustomed to hearing that the tawa or way of seeing is in some sense the outlook, the justification, the point of view, of that school or tradition. In the Buddhist philosophy it's said that thus and such is the tawa of Nagarjuna. And thus in ancient India there existed four schools.

Following that example in Tibet too, there have always been four principal schools. And if you're considering an individual who follows the Gelugpa school for example, when one becomes a bit of a sympathizer with that school and tradition, one always studies more deeply what is the Gelugpa viewpoint, the tawa of the Gelugpas, which is to say "What did Tsong Khapa say?" And one does a kind of brain re-education for entering into what Tsong Khapa said.

Similarly a Nyingmapa behaves in that fashion. Because they think "We Nyingmapas have Longchenpa" who occupies a bit the position of Tsong Khapa. And so I, all of my outlook and my convictions, I seek to modify so that they resemble or come ever closer to the view of Longchenpa. The Sakyapas do the same thing. The Kagyudpas do the same thing. They all proceed in this fashion. If we study how one of these school works, we find that they study for years and years to deepen their, these, ideas.

Then of course from this arises the desire to say "Our school is better than the others." If not, how can you distinguish and differentiate the characteristics and qualities of the one school from the other. But the truth is, this doesn't cover all of the territory. There are many many other ways of seeing.

In the Gelugpa school for example, there were many different great monasteries like Sera, and ???. And inside each of these monasteries there were various gomsen ??? as they are called, which are like colleges. And each gomsen had its set of texts. There was for example a gomsen called Lonsel ??? and they were specialized, completely specialized, in the texts of Junjapa ???. Another gomsen specialized in the works of the fifth Dalai Lama. And so another based its viewpoint on some other great learned figure. And there are hundreds of debates, polemics, and disputes between them. So, and this was never, was endless was constantly subsections and subsections, each defining its own as a way of seeing.

When I first arrived in Italy at the very beginning, I went for a summer to study the Italian language at the university for foreigners in Perugia ???. During that period there was an election going on. And every day there was great deal of noise everywhere. And the professor was examining us and questioning each one of us. And at a certain point he asked me to ask a question. I didn't know what I was to ask. The first question that came to me was "How many parties, political parties, are there in Italy?" His response was "We have 54 million political parties." This answer pleased me a great deal.

The truth is that tawa is like that. Because each

individual has his way of seeing. Only that each different way of seeing isn't officially recognized as tawa. When we speak of a recognized tawa, we mean a way of seeing that's logically established, of which there may be books which provide logical justification, at which point many people begin to be convinced of that way of seeing and it accumulates a numerous following. And this is how schools arise. And this process continues also today. When a given way of seeing is already making progress, has an impetus, it continues to develop and thrive. And this is how sectarianism is born, and this is a principle which it follows.

And many people have really no idea of what is truly a way of seeing and what it consists in. But they become adherents. They become members of something. "We're like this. They're like that". Even if they don't minimally understand the principle involved, they say "Oh they take refuge in that way. We take refuge in this way. The words are different." Now we're already human beings which means with all of our passions and limitations. If we proceed to limit ourselves evermore, at a certain point we just don't know where that's going to end.

In the Dzogchen teaching, the tawa or way of seeing means exactly something for discovering this self-limitation, for uncovering it, and understanding it. For which reason, the tawa, the way of seeing, really means observing oneself, not limiting the individual, but discovering one's limitations. And thus observing ourselves, we discover the principle of our existence, as body, as voice, and as mind. All of the limitations that we have are always linked to these three. When one has discovered then through self-observation, the real limitations and problems which are linked to our three ways of existing, then one begins to understand also the ways of possibly resolving these problems, and what method or means there may be to get out of this difficulty. Then one begins to understand what the path really is.

If one hasn't begun from self-observation, then one is merely following a teaching from faith. And there are various ways to have faith. If one has faith which has arisen from one's actual knowledge of the principle, of the condition, of the individual, then there's no harm. But it's very rare that there should be faith based on experience and knowledge. More usually faith arises through attachment. And faith arises from ignorance. One says "I follow this teaching. Why? Because my brother teaches it." Or "I practice such and such. Why? Because our family has always followed that way." Or "I do this. Why? Because my generation or, because our tradition, is like this." A Tibetan will tell you "I'm a Buddhist. Why? Because I'm a Tibetan." And all of this is untruth. It's a completely mistaken principle.

Then there's another kind of faith. Many people say "I felt a vibration when I met that person. So I followed his teachings." There are many people whose faith is of this type, without any principle. Because a vibration can easily stop coming tomorrow. Therefore when the vibration is over, the faith cools off too. So one has to discover what the real principle is. Until one does that, whatever one believes in is only provisional and temporary.

There are many people who follow teachings, and it's like some kind of chess game in which the situation changes with every move. Many years ago when I was in India, I met a French nun. She had formerly been a Catholic missionary. I don't know what went wrong, but then she became a Hindu and spent many years in Calcutta. Then she came to Kalimpong and became a Buddhist. But she wasn't satisfied. She wanted to become a specialized Buddhist of some kind. So she went to a Gelugpa master, and she became a Gelugpa. And for two or three years she was a Gelugpa militant. And she became a very strict nun. Then a few years later she met a Nyingmapa master who lives in Sikkim. And for two years she was a Nyingmapa. Then she met Shasema ??, a Kagyudpa master, and became a Kagyudpa.

When I met her she was still a Kagyudpa. I met her because she came to me. She wanted to become a Sakyapa. Somebody had told her that I had been many years in the Sakyapa monasteries and colleges, so she was coming to me. She wanted to hear something about becoming a Sakyapa. Certainly I didn't know what to tell her. I found it rather boring to talk to her. I talked to her for awhile. After a few years I heard that she'd gone to Burma and become a nun there, a Theravada nun. I don't know how she's finished.

There are any people like that. This really means she hadn't understood the principle. Because when you've got so much need to change, that means you haven't understood the principle. If you've truly understood your condition, you have nothing that needs to change. When you find yourself in the condition of what you are, even if you want to erase something, or cancel something, you can't cancel.

Let's take the example, as we have before, of a mysterious object. Until I've had a direct experience in seeing with my own eyes this object, hundreds of different people can give me descriptions of it. And I can be completely convinced every one of these hundreds of times by the description that people give me. That is to say, I have something to change in my ideas. But if I have genuine and direct experience with this object with which we're dealing, I have no way of cancelling that knowledge. So one has to observe oneself a bit and discover one's real condition.

Our condition, we say this often, is as limited as that of a little bird in a cage. Limited first of all, and above all, by our physical bodies. And all of our limitations, our material limitations, arise from this fact of the material body. But it doesn't end there. Still more important are all of our limitation, difficulties and problems that arise in regard to our energy. Behind this lies a still more important realm of the mind.

For example, somebody has nothing to eat. But one day even though he has nothing to eat, his mind may be happy. The person might think "Even though I have nothing to eat, how well I fell." But then in that case, finding something to eat is much simpler because material problems are relatively easy to deal with. But it's much more difficult and complex resolving problems of energy and of the mind. So as one discovers what is one's real condition, one begins to understand where all this arises from. If one discovers where

all the problems come from, then one also finds the way of resolving them.

Now if one is following a path, one knows why one is following that path, and now one knows whether that path corresponds to one's own needs or not. It's not that somebody has to come and judge me. It's not that somebody has come and said "Come here. Follow this path. It's very good for you. It's fantastic for you." If I don't really understand my condition, my situation, and am therefore unable to tell whether that path really corresponds to my needs and my situation, I can't take on faith what somebody tells me.

Somebody can explain all they want to and give many different descriptions. But we're still in the situation of falsehood, of inauthenticity, like that of the mysterious object. I may discover of myself that I've not been sincere, that I've not really believed any of this, and only discovered after many many years.

So it's really true that the way of seeing has to be used for discovering myself. This is a means, like a key, for opening oneself. Thus one understands well what the path is. When one knows what the path is and what it's useful for, then one begins to enter into practice. Therefore in the Dzogchen teaching, we always say that the principal point is not meditation. The principal consideration is truly understanding. And as regards this knowledge, practice itself involves finding oneself concretely, experientially, in that knowledge. If one doesn't know what one is doing, and then embarks on a whole series of complicated doings, it makes no sense.

We say contemplation is very important. Why is it important? Because it's a way of finding oneself beyond this relative way of existing as body, voice and mind. But finding oneself beyond this condition does not mean renouncing or refusing or escaping from our situation. To find oneself and live in the purity, limpidity, and capacity for reflection of the mirror, its existence as mirror doesn't mean renouncing reflections. It means finding oneself in that state, reflecting, because that's one's characteristic, to give reflections, and yet not governed by those reflections.

And the method, the only means for arriving at that, is contemplation. Everything outside this contemplation is what we call our dualistic existence. And if one finds oneself and lives only in that condition, it's as if one is conditioned and governed by the reflections. For this reason you begin to understand why you should do contemplation.

And then finally begins what we call meditation, or contemplation, or practice. In general we use the word gompa. Gompa is translated in many different ways. Gompa can be translated as concentration, as meditation, as contemplation. What it means depends explicitly on what it is you're doing and how you proceed.

In this regard there is in the Dzogchen teaching, three series of teachings, the Semde series, the Longde series, the Upadesha series. And above all the fundamental basis, the body of the Dzogchen teaching, is the Semde teaching of Dzogchen. And what we call the Longde teaching is like the most important points, the essential points of the Semde

teaching. And then particular points, selected points, more elaborated, more articulated and which the masters have taught with their own experience, this we call the Upadesha.

The Upadesha has been very widespread recently in recent times. Why? Because many masters have discovered terms of Upadesha. And thus one can say that the Semde series has been rather neglected. But the truth is that if one has to go into concrete practice, the Semde is very, very important.

And then you have to remember the three last statements of Garab Dorje. He said "direct introduction". And this is fundamental for one who enters into a knowledge. If you've not had an introduction, if you've not been introduced, there's no way to contemplate. You don't even know what's meant by contemplation. So the first matter for entering into contemplation is direct introduction.

And the second statement is "to not remain in doubt". To not remain in doubt means you've had an introduction and you've known something. To not remain in doubt does not mean that one decides to not doubt something. Mentally you can decide all you want. But you can also be mistaken all the time. So that doesn't mean "not being in doubt".

By not remaining in doubt, we mean as in the case of that mysterious object, now having seen it, having actually had direct experience of it, you know what it is through your own eyes. No interpretation or explanation can confuse me. Now even if hundreds of different people each give a different description, I can understand perfectly well what they're talking about. And I don't have anything to change. This is what's meant by not remaining in doubt.

And in the last word, the last statement is "continue in that knowledge". But this means of course that first of all, you have to have a knowledge and not be in doubt about it, and then continue. Because otherwise you have no knowledge to continue. So you can see the enormous importance of the Semde series of Dzogchen teachings, because the Semde works above all on this first point of Garab Dorje's direct introduction. And above all it's with practice that one is brought to this knowledge of perfect and direct introduction.

When one speaks of the three transmissions, it's the oral transmission which is primarily linked with Semde. This is why in the Semde teachings, there exist hundreds of original Dzogchen texts. Then how do you do the practice? How do you go into practice? How do you go into contemplation in the Semde? I'll give a bit of a summary. Then for those of you who are interested in this and want to deepen it, there are many transcripts which I gave other years. And one can practice this and elaborate it a bit. You have to remember that that's really fundamental, the Semde teachings, for Dzogchen.

Above all you have to remember that Dzogchen is not just an idea. Many people understand, or seem to understand, quite well. They've got the point, but that's where it stays and remains. So Dzogchen remains a kind of idea and life passes. Life passes. It passes and passes and then one day it's over and nothing has been concluded or finalized. So for this reason Semde is very important, because it genuinely informs you.

To enter into the practice, into practice in Semde, there are four states or four levels of practice. This is true not only in the Semde, but in Semde, in Longde, and in Upadesha this is so. First there's a kind of shinay (zhi-gnas) which exists. In the Semde there are masters who call these naljor (rnal-'byor), that is, yogas, four yogas. Or some call it four contemplations. But in any case the name is of no importance.

The first they call naypa (gnas-pa). It's naypay naljor (gnas-pa'i rnal-'byor), or naypay tinggezin (gnas-pa'i ting-nge-'dzin). Tinggezin means contemplation. Naypa is what we were explaining yesterday when we spoke of nay, gyo, rigpa. Naypa is to find a state of calm of mind. This more or less corresponds to what's called shinay. When we say shinay, shi means calm.

First of all to enter into this state there are two practices, what are called migjay (dmigs-bcas) and migmay (dmigs-med). Mig means as if I'm focussing attention on something. Or mig could also mean sometimes that there's a concept. Migmay means without that, without that intention, or attention, or concept. These are two levels.

For the first, migjay, the most, let's say, traditional way of practicing is to fix on the letter AH. Why the letter AH? Because the letter AH implies its sound. When we see a letter, if we know that letter, automatically we associate the sound. And the sound of the letter AH is a natural and neutral sound which governs all sounds. Thus while I'm fixing on this letter, it's also possible for me to sound it.

It's not said that I must obligatorily sound it while fixing on it. But while I'm doing fixation, if I don't succeed in fixing my gaze and attention, or if I'm very agitated, and I'm overly disturbed by thoughts, and even if I'm fixing very acutely, very sharply, I'm not succeeding. It's very important and useful to use the sound of the AH.

This sound that issues from the mouth is of course linked with one's breathing. And I'm fixing on the AH which implies this same sound. The mind is always linked to that, is always occupied with, linked to recognition, of that letter which corresponds to the sound I'm sounding. This means that everything, prana, the vital energy, my breathing, my intention and attention, are all convergent on this letter AH. With this practice, even if you're near crazy with agitation, you can succeed with fixation. And this is why we utilize the AH.

But it's not said that you must obligatorily, only, must practice with the AH. If you always remain with a precise fixation on a specified point, then that itself instead of practice, becomes limitation. Let's say you want to train yourself a bit in fixation. Since you're not a monk, and you don't live in a monastery for example, but are rather a person who lives a normal life, let's say you're taking a walk. Certainly in the middle of the street you're not going to do fixation.

But you might arrive in a garden. And you might think "Well I'll do some fixation now." In your pocket you carry around a written AH. You take out a thumbtack and put it on a tree. And you sit there in front of the tree looking at the

AH. Then somebody comes. And they say "What's he doing?" Not everybody knows that one does fixation on the AH. If we're talking about a rather strange country like India or China, here people are very curious. In a few minutes you'll have three or four hundred people there looking at you. And you become a very strange thing indeed.

So you can't do this kind of work so easily. So in this case you can do fixation anywhere on anything. If I'm sitting in a bus, there's obviously something at which I could look. If I'm seated on a bench in the street, I always find something in front of my eyes. You have to understand that fixation is only for focussing attention. Where you fix the gaze is where you direct your attention.

And owing to this fixation, you're not giving space to thoughts. If I fix on some object in an acute sharp way, in that moment my thoughts don't have the possibility of continuing to arise. Then I slowly relax that fixation, and find that my thoughts are calmer. There may be people who have need to keep up fixation for a very long time, because their thoughts immediately begin to disturb them. They don't succeed in finding any calm state. This type of person will continue to do fixation for a rather long time.

At times you may encounter some kind of problem. It's quite possible. If one is fixed very, very sharply, very acutely, on an object for a very long time, that object on which you're fixing starts to change, or it disappears, or strange colors emerge. Or you may see something very strange. I'm looking at the ball of this microphone for example, and suddenly I see a face that's making grimaces at me. Who knows if it's a nyam, or you might think a miracle. It's neither a nyam nor a miracle. It's simply characteristic of very sharp fixation and focus.

What you do in that case is you just relax the sharpness of the fixation. If when you relax that fixation you find you still aren't succeeding in calming thought, then it emerges that it's not enough for you to control thought through fixation. You better stop a bit to control your energy. Relax a bit. Give yourself a little room. And do some breathing, some deep breathing. Then the next time you do fixation the face there won't make grimaces at you. And then slowly, slowly you can let go of this focussed attention.

Sometimes when doing fixation, drowsiness comes. You started doing fixation and you fall asleep. If this is the case it means you relaxed the focussed attention too much. You must understand that the fixation is simply to regulate thought. You know that fixation doesn't mean thinking of that thing. I'm sure you all know this very well.

When I was little, I didn't know that. I remember when I was about five years old, my uncle was teaching somebody fixation. And I heard this and I thought "I'll try that too." He was instructing the men to do fixation on a blue flower. This is something that's very much done in the Sakyapa tradition. Because a blue colored flower doesn't disturb the eyes. I thought that it meant that I had to think of that blue flower. Because he said "You have to fix on it."

So I continued to think all the time "This is a blue flower. This is a blue flower. This is a blue flower." And

when some other thought arose, I kept trying to transform it, insisting to myself "No, no, it's a blue flower. It's a blue flower." I only understood that that wasn't how you do it when I got to the college. I was nine years old. Until that time I was completely convinced that fixing meant thinking constantly of the object. So somebody could have that notion, that mistaken notion. But in any case, where you're fixed, what you're fixing the gaze and attention upon, that has nothing to do with thinking about that. It's simply a point for attention.

So you have your attention pointed at that locus and there's no room for thoughts. Then as you slowly relax that attention there, it's very easy that you find that you're in the calm state. And thus it's said that, above all, this state of *naypa* expands. But also if some thought arises, it's not able to disturb you. So in this way slowly, slowly, you relax as much as possible.

When you're able fully to dominate thoughts so that thoughts don't disturb you, that means that you no longer need to do fixation with an object. Now you can do fixation without an object. When you begin fixation without an object, you must always begin as if you had an object on which you were fixed. Even though you're fixed looking into space, you fix as if there were a point of reference with a kind of triangulated attention. And then you slowly relax that or let go.

Because if you're rather habituated to fixation on an object and through that have found a calm state, you become a bit like a bee who's circling a flower. All of your thought is regulated a bit by the point on which you're fixed. As soon as there is no such flower, the bees begin to buzz off in all directions and even get nervous and start stinging. And so in the absence of the point of reference for fixation, thoughts can begin to manifest themselves in an agitated way immediately. So you fix as if there were a point of reference and then slowly relax that attention.

Those people who begin right at the the beginning with fixation, at the very beginning it's also rather useful to control bodily position, breathing, etc. And this is taught primarily in *yantra* yoga. But you mustn't always be conditioned by this. Above all, if you succeed in relaxing, then you also relax the bodily position and the breathing. And thus from fixation you move towards a rather loose situation.

Now you're in a calm state undisturbed by thought, and that's more or less the state of *shinay*. And that becomes rather familiar to you and rather spontaneous. And you begin to notice rather clearly in this state, the *naypa*, the calm of mind, but also clarity when thought presents itself, and also your presence, your noticing, the noticing itself, of any sensations or impressions. And then one becomes able to continue in this state for as long as one likes. This we call a state of stable *shinay*.

Then we come to the second phase of this practice, the second *migmay* we say. When we say *migyowa*, it's very similar to what is often spoken of as *lhagtong*. This means that one has to learn how to work a bit more with movement or activity.

In shinay it's as if one had always been seeking a calm state. But the condition of the individual, the situation of the individual, isn't always immobile and calm. We also move. Above all what we call gyūwa, movement of thought, is linked to one's energy.

Now one must find oneself above all with the presence, the noticing or perceiving, of this movement, of gyūwa, which we liken to the leaping of fish in a calm lake. When we say the calm state of stable shinay, it's as if there was a state to enter, and which can end, and from which you can come out. Because that's a state not integrated with our movement and activity. When we finish we say we get up and we go do this or we go do that. And to the mind this idea comes. And idea of doing this or that and the body follows the mind and does this or that. All that we describe as energy. All that belongs to what we call gyūwa, movement.

Certainly when we speak of the state of gyūwa, in the state of shinay we mean that bit of movement, that flicker, which is every so often thoughts coming. But it's not just that thought comes. Thought also has its consequences, that is, it pushes you into movement and activity. And that's the real gyūwa. Now we have to train ourselves aiming at working with that.

Let's say we're in a calm state, and in that calm state many many thoughts arise. And I continue to be in that calm state until everything outside disappears. And my awareness, my presence, it's as if I was almost a lake. But in this lake are moving many many fish, some boats. Somebody's swimming. Little fish are jumping. I'm aware of it all. I see it all. I don't judge anything. That's a state of shinay in which I find myself. It seems almost as if I am that lake.

To work with gyūwa means that I find myself re-integrated with that movement. It's not that a fish is jumping in me the lake. But I am that fish. I'm jumping. And I am similarly all of those movements which are happening. Yesterday we spoke a great deal about the distinction between the rigpa and the nyam. If I am like the lake and in me are happening all these events, it's like a nyam. But if I'm integrated with, and am, those events, all those happenings, and am perceiving them, this is the state of rigpa. It's not that you find that you're somehow an observer, observing all that.

Here talking about observation, of course we're talking about mentally observing. But there's also, there's a way of observing without judging, just being witness, just being present. However, that's not it yet. It's rather being present in that which is observed, being present, being the noticing and the awareness in that which is observed. It's not that I'm the calm lake. But I'm present in, I am aware in that which is in this condition of the calmness. It's not as if I'm looking at an object. But I'm aware of who is observing.

So it's very, there's a very different way of finding yourself. There's a very different way of perceiving, being the observer being aware of the observer. Then I'm finding myself in the presence; perceiving of the state of rigpa in gyūwa, in movement. And this is one of the fundamental points in practice.

All that we have spoken of yesterday, the principle of the state of rigpa, in the Dzogchen Semde all of this shinay takes you to this presence, this perceiving. In the Semde we speak of this as melting or dissolving the shinay. Because the shinay has become like "a state". If that has become your condition or situation there's no way of integrating it with movement. When this state of shinay is loosened or melted, or dissolved, then there's a way of integrating with movement. This is very important in Semde but also in general. This is the second state of the four, the one called migyowa. Migyowa means unmoving. It means integrated. There's nothing to move.

Then the third is called yermay (dbyer-med). It means there's nothing, that it's indistinguishable. You can't separate it out. They're not two. In general the word yerwa (dbyer-ba) means to analyze. And here we speak of something that can't be analyzed, can't be broken down. Here it means that the state of naypa, calm, and gyuwa, movement, can't be distinguished. They're inextricably together. They can't be sorted out. It's not that mentally you're uniting them. We speak of zungjug (zung-'jug) which is union.

But you find yourself exactly in a condition in which you don't distinguish them. This means that in practice you've genuinely entered into what's called sewa (bsre-ba), that is, to mix. To mix means to mix with all of our behavior, all of our attitude and doing. If one is habituated a bit sufficiently to this contemplation, then this contemplation is no longer segregated in some temple or cave. But I've trained myself constantly in contemplation and mix it with the workings of my body, my voice, my mind.

Before this one has said "I'm doing meditation. I'm doing contemplation." I'm almost seated like a statue of the Buddha, correct lotus position, back straight, looking just like the Buddha. Somebody comes near and you say "Come here. You've interrupted my contemplation." This means that you're in a limited state of shinay. It can be broken, interrupted, ended. If I really was capable of integrating, there would be no interruption. He took hold of my shoulder. He touched me. It's all part of the movement. So now the gyuwa is also yermay, that is, integrated.

So one begins to train oneself. We're not hoping and imagining that all this is just going to ZAP, burst out like an explosion. But practice involves training oneself and bettering oneself. One has acquired a bit of immediate felt awareness, self-contemplation. And now one begins to move the body with that awareness. It's not said that contemplation means having to always remain in position. You get up. You walk. You do something. If you succeed, you carry your contemplation with you.

And the same thing is happening with the voice. You're moving and using the voice and training yourself to take contemplation with you as when you're singing the song of the vajra. But it's not that our voice is limited exclusively to the song of the vajra. There are other things you might sing. You might jabber and chatter a little. And you can say beautiful things and you can say horrible things. And all of this belongs to our voice. And all of that has to enter into

contemplation.

And then above all there's the mind. You have to remember that the mind finds itself in time. And you think "How is it possible?. The mind has to think something. If I'm doing contemplation, how can I be thinking?" It's as if somebody says "The point here is you're saying you have to think about something. You have a problem to think about. How can I do it if I'm in contemplation?"

And it's just like saying "If I'm in the state of the mirror, how could I reflect?" There's no problem reflecting. The mirror reflects because that's its characteristic, to make reflections. The mind and our existence find themselves in time, but contemplation is beyond time. So there's plenty of room in contemplation. It's just that we don't know how to apply it, for which reason we have to train ourselves. And we begin with our body, our voice, our mind.

And the body, voice, and mind have all kinds of behaviors, what we call good, what we call bad, and what we call neutral. Somebody's doing a ngondro for example. They learn very well how to do prostrations and they think "I'm really doing something good." And there's a visualization of everything that he's doing. Now suppose instead of imagining or visualizing what he's doing, he accompanies that behavior with contemplation. It's not hard while contemplating to do a prostration. It's not hard while in contemplation to take the positions of yantra and do the movements or to walk.

At a certain point you can bring the movements of our work into contemplation. This is the way we expand contemplation until it embraces all of our daily life. I didn't say that it was super easy and that you're going to succeed immediately in bringing all daily life into contemplation. If it was so easy why would Milarepa be up there making all those sacrifices and efforts.

We know that even today there are many many people that do these three year retreats. This is evidence that it isn't so easy to do all these things. But it isn't like having to do some kind of super complicated visualization of transformation. If we've learned to do a visualization of transformation of the Kalachakra for example, first of all you can't do virtually any other practice. But if you want to do that, you absolutely have to find something like a retreat or a quiet secluded situation for quite a time. In that case you need to have all your necessities perfectly met. Otherwise you're not going to arrive at anything.

But when we speak of practice as we're doing today, which can be brought into daily life, we're talking about practice that's not so conditioned by external considerations. One must first of all know what one has to do, to not be indifferent, negligent, about it uncaring, but rather very so often seize an opportunity and do some practicing. Of all things in life, learning is not one of the easiest. It takes effort. But when you've learned something, and you're completely familiar with it, then it's easy. And practice can be understood and worked at this level.

Then at the end the fourth state we call lhundrub. Lhundrub means that one finds oneself in this state, quite perfected, quite complete, where there's no longer the border

between practicing and not practicing, contemplating and not contemplating. One truly finds oneself in the dimension of contemplation. And all of our attitude and behaviour have totally entered into that. We don't need any longer what we call the "not letting oneself be distracted". We don't need any longer the effort to be always aware.

Let's say our behavior while eating, while walking, while sleeping, while sitting, all of this behavior is covered by contemplation. Then this famous self-perfectedness manifests. Then there's no renouncing anything or doing something special. This, let's, say would be the ultimate phase. Then the human being becomes Dzogchen, the great perfection. This is the fourth stage of Semde. That's pretty much how you do the practice of Semde. Now I've explained how you do Semde. If we have a little time, I'll explain a little more, elaborate a little further.

I'll explain how you do the practice of Longde. You can do this practice. There are many copies of the transcripts in which this practice was taught in great detail. First of all you have to understand that the practice of the Longde is above all a way of working with the second emphasis, the second statement, of those three last statements of Garab Dorje. But it's not only that. It's primarily that.

Certainly when we speak of a method like Longde or like Upadesha, it's always complete. It has all the emphases. You mustn't think that to do the practice of the Longde, you have to have first done the Semde. It's not like that. Each is complete in itself. The Dzogchen teaching, whether it be Semde, Longde, or Upadesha, is never a gradual method. That it is not gradual or graded means that the principal and highest method, practice, being communicated is always contemplation. That's always the principal concern. It's always immediately given.

Of this Garab Dorje said "direct introduction". He didn't say "First of all long preparation." But we don't know if from direct introduction, the individual has really understood or not. If he hasn't understood there's a reason. It could be an impediment of some kind. It could be some kind of an obstacle. Then you go and search out what the impediment or obstacle was. What the factor preventing understanding was, and you try to overcome it.

But this is not the same as considering that from the beginning the individual necessarily has a heap of impediments and obstacles, or considering that automatically, necessarily, the individual isn't in a position to understand. You try at least, and see whether the individual understands or not. This is what's meant by a non-gradual method.

When we say gradual, a gradual method is linked a bit to tradition and system, where the rule is if you haven't done this, you can't yet do that. If you haven't finished elementary school, don't talk about going to university. When you present yourself to university, you've got to present your high school diploma. That's what we call a gradual method.

And it's a very widespread way of seeing. Very widespread means that the individual is discounted automatically, as being full of passions, full of obstacles. So he has to first do this, then do that, then do that, and

that's the way the structure is constituted. But if that's the way you proceed, you don't even really much need a master. Particularly in America all you'd have to do is work up a beautiful program or chart, a computer program.

Working with a master means a bit working with the genuine capacity of the individual, with where he's really at, and not operating off of some kind of automatic computer program. So in this case you go right to it and see whether the individual understands or not. And this we call direct introduction. You have to understand that it's not a gradual path. And there's no obligation to first do the practice of the Semde. You can start with the practice of the Semde. You can start right away with the practice of the Longde.

You also have to understand that these are not different schools or different traditions. People are so used to this kind of splitting that they talk about the tradition of the Longde, the masters of the Longde, as if that was some find of faction or group. But in relatively recent times, from Minling Terchen Gyurmay Dorje, all of these lineages are united. This consideration about lineage just doesn't exist, though the methods, yes, are a bit diverse.

Methods for taking you to contemplation do involve a different way of doing something. Semde we've said emphasizes, above all but not exclusively, direct introduction, while Longde works above all but not entirely, with a method for not remaining in doubt. "To have you not remain in doubt" means principally that you have an actual experience.

And this practice is based above all on what are called the four da (brda). Da means symbol. In spoken Tibetan da also refers to, let's say, a hand gesture. A symbolic gesture of the hand - that would be a da. And these four das are based above all on the principle of our essence, nature, and energy. And these are represented by the states of mitogpa (mi-rtog-pa), or void, salwa (gsal-ba), clarity, and dewa (bde-ba), sensation or feeling. And then at the end there what's called nyamnid (mnyam-nyid), that is, the state of all these three being co-present, together. And at bottom that's what the four da are.

First of all for doing practice in the Longde, much importance is given to controlling your breath. And they work with breathing, with the position of the breath, and with the position of the body. Because in the Longde, the working of energy is very closely linked to the presence of feeling, of sensation. In the moment of practice it's very important that the major part of breath be for men on the left, for women on the right.

If you don't find that your breathing is like that, you change it so it will be like that. And the way you do that is by lying down, by changing position. One way to change position, lie down and you lie down on one side leaving free the side where the major part of the breathing should be. There are also different positions you can take. Positions which favor the continuation of this correct breathing. And the correct breathing is favored by finding yourself simultaneously in the state of mitogpa, or clarity, and of sensation.

How you do this practice, what way you breathe, what position you take, how you use the belt, all how you move, all of it is clearly indicated in those transcripts which are readily available. There are lots and lots of copies here. What's most important is to understand the four da. The four da can be explained intellectually, or they can be explained practically. We're aiming a bit at the conclusions in practice.

You look into space. When we look into space we don't mean that we're looking at some precise point. If you're in a house, somewhere before you get to the wall is space. Everything beyond my outstretched fingers is space. If you happen to be practicing in the open and can look into the limpid sky, that's all the better. You look with your eyes static, unmoving. You don't move your eyes. Because that's the principle of the method of mitogpa. The eyes are unmoving.

Also in the Semde, and also at certain points in the Upadesha, there are moments when you are told that the eyes must be unmoving. When the eyes are stopped, unmoving, thoughts automatically calm. Above all it's very easy to find this state of mitogpa, of calm.

We've already defined the word mitogpa which generally means not thinking, no thoughts, or no judging of thoughts. Sometimes mitogpa is understood as "without any presence of thought". But here rather we mean primarily not "not thought", but "not being conditioned by thought, not being disturbed by thought".

If you are seated in position looking into space, gazing into open space, not moving the eyes, then you know, then and there, what mitogpa is. That state, how it is, that's what's called mitogpa. Because the method of the practice of the Longde is extremely experiential. It's not a matter of explanation. You do it and that's it.

For example somebody says "Close your nostrils, and then breathe out hard." How would your mind be at that moment? It's like a rushan. In that moment thought blocks. There's not much to explain about that. You try it. When you've done it, you know what it's like. It's just like that. You don't move your eyes. You look into space. You know mitogpa.

Then there's the da of salwa, clarity. It's the fact that the eyes are open, wide open, while staring into space. Not only in Longde but in all of the teaching of Dzogchen, it's always said that when you do contemplation the eyes are open. Because open eyes means contact with our vision, all that which presents itself. But because vision here is not just something imagined or transformed or pure vision. Vision means also our impure vision.

Since all that which presents itself at the level of tsal is all our tsal, our energy, there's nothing to renounce, nothing to give up, nothing to change. It's all to be experienced in a living way. So the eyes have to be opened. Your eyes are open, stopped, unmoving. And now you have mitogpa and now you also have clarity. This clarity is not the clarity of reasoning or thinking something. Clarity is a part or an aspect of immediate presence, immediate awareness. Now these are the expressions of those two elements or aspects

of our condition which we call essence and nature.

Then we have the third da, the da of feeling or sensation. The da of feeling or sensation is linked to our position, our body and also a bit our breathing. But the principal element of this pleasurable sensation is not exactly kumbhaka as in yantra yoga, but a slight holding or tensing of the bottom of the trunk, of the pelvic floor. It's not a holding of the breath, but it's a slight tensing of the whole lower part of the body, of the anus and genitals. The whole pelvic floor is slightly tense, just slightly held up. That gives a little bit of feeling of sensation.

It's not grinding. It's just slightly tense. Many people say "Oh, I really did that and I have a stomachache." If you've got a stomachache after a quarter of an hour, it means you're really pulling too hard, tightening and stressing yourself too much. You don't have to do something like that. You just tighten up enough to have a slight sensation. And there's just this noticing of sensation which governs this clarity and void, mitogpa. And this contributes to a living awareness, a felt presence.

These three, the mitogpa or emptiness or undisturbed by thought, the clarity or salwa, and the dewa or sensation, have to be simultaneously present all at the same moment. And this is called the da or sign or symbol of the nyamid. Nyam means altogether. Nyam means the same, all the same. And nid means precisely, condition. It's not that one is first, one is second, one is third. Nothing like that. When you explain it you have to say one or another first and one or another second obligatorily. But applied, it's all applied at the same time. And this produces a very precise experiential result. There's a state which results from that.

When you do this practice, the sign of the nyamid is to place the tongue in the middle of the mouth. It's not touching the top or the bottom. It's right at the center of the mouth. At that point if you have some experience and we've spoken of it a good deal in the Semde, we've spoken of it a good deal in the Upadesha, you have contact with rigpa. And with these four das that becomes something very concrete, very felt. This we call direct experience. And with this direct immediate awareness, felt awareness of presence, you have no more doubts. You have an experience. You don't remain in doubt.

Now utilizing a bit position, breathing, and so forth, at times it is useful to balance our elements. And how one must do that when one's elements are unbalanced - above all as one develops vision - there are many things to do. And I think there are detailed explanations in the transcripts. Because certainly we can't explain it all in one moment.

Last year we spent the whole year explaining the Longde, whole retreats explaining the Longde. So obviously you can't do it just in an instant. For those of you who are interested, you can deepen your knowledge. You can examine the transcripts and acquire the method. Rather what's important is that someone who is interested in the Dzogchen teaching must understand the principle both of the Semde and of the Longde. But it's not just because they say "There's something called the Semde. There's something called the

Longde." That's not the principle. You have to know what it consists of, so that an individual can actually apply it. And it's for this reason that we're doing this explaining. Now we've finished.

[Friday afternoon, 23-Jul-82]

I'll explain something about the red book. In this red book there are three, four, five diverse ways of doing practice. Principally it's always practice based on what we call Guruyoga. And that's fundamental. When we speak of practice of Dzogchen, we always find that. Because firstly, we always speak of finding oneself in knowledge. Knowledge comes to us through transmission. Transmission comes to us from the masters. And above all a person receives a transmission from a master and enters into knowledge.

But this knowledge is then like a seed which must then be developed. As we spoke yesterday, we gave an example of the state of bardo where there is the encounter of what we call the mother light and the son light. This son wisdom, S O N, is that knowledge which had been gained in one's lifetime through transmission.

And the example is given for this that in the sky there are many clouds. Amid the clouds one catches a glimpse of the sun rising. We've said, that the sky is cloudy. So it's not that one merely has an idea of the sun. But on the other hand one has only seen the sun emerging for a moment between clouds. So one has had a direct experience.

What one obtains through introduction is analogous to this. One has entered into this knowledge, but that's still not fully ripened. And that's why it's useful to do practice as one pursues the path. Even if one has entered into a certain knowledge, on the path various methods and means are employed. Developing and progressing, one arrives at a certain moment at a point which can be likened to seeing the sun without the clouds. And this example of total knowledge of the sun unhidden by the clouds is analogous to the mother wisdom.

Operating in terms of our existence we've said that this meeting of the son wisdom and the mother wisdom takes place after death in the bardo of the dharmata. This is a natural way that things can occur, but it's by no means obligatory that to achieve realization one has to wait until after death, until the bardo.

There is realization of the type that is spoken of as the body of light. The realization of the body of light means a manifestation of realization in life without one's having to pass through the bardo. That means that the experience of this encounter of which we've spoken between the mother wisdom and the son wisdom takes place in such a case in life.

In particular when we speak of the Upadesha teachings of Dzogchen, the development of vision through the practice called thogay, takes place in four successive levels. When the third level is completed, and one is on the threshold of the fourth, this means that the total experience of the meeting between mother wisdom and son wisdom has already taken place.

And how does one develop all this? Through that knowledge

from the beginning which we call the son wisdom. It has to be developed from there. And this is always linked with transmission. For that reason, one maintains and also cultivates and deepens that transmission with the method we call Guruyoga.

Guru means at bottom master. Master or teacher is a very generic term. There can be all kinds of masters and teachers. But when we speak of a true master in the teaching of Dzogchen, we mean a teacher whose communication awakens the individual to his own condition.

But when we do a Guruyoga, we don't insist on that kind of limitation. Because a transmission, a teaching, which an individual has received, which he does not then maintain and preserve, becomes an obstacle. Above all this is true of many types of teaching which are part of, or linked to, Tantrism. In the many initiations given in such teachings, each initiation bears with it its specific promises and vows.

Many people without knowing much, receive hundreds of initiations. Behind each one is a promise, a commitment, to practice, usually a practice of the method of transformation. This is in order to realize, to render concrete, that transformation, and usually it's accompanied also by methods of mantra. At the very least when an initiation is given, they speak of an initiation of body, voice, and mind.

In the commitments that one makes with an initiation of transformation, the transformation or concentration, visualization, is considered as applying to the body. That of the voice is the commitment to recite the mantra one has received. That of the mind is a commitment to practice contemplation. That is, through the practice of transformation one is brought to contemplation. So every initiation bears with it its promises. Some initiations are longer and more complex. Others briefer and more simple. This means that every individual who has received such initiations carries numbers of promises.

Let's take an example. First of all when you take a Tantric initiation, you're given a water to drink. And this is called the water of one's vows, of one's promises. When you drink that water you've taken a kind of oath. You've sworn to follow that which you're about to commit yourself to. Many people don't know all this and collect hundreds of different initiations. If one does this and then does nothing about these commitments, far from having done yourself good, what you've done is created obstacles and impediments for yourself.

What do you have to do? You have to maintain the transmission. If you're a practitioner of Dzogchen and you understand the principle involved, and you don't remain in some limited, boxed-in condition, you can for all of these commitments made, carry them to the level of Guruyoga. Whatever transmissions you may have received, you can take them to the level of their unification, and at that level practice the Guruyoga. In such a case it all becomes positive. That is to say, you're acting to deepen and develop all the transmissions you've received.

You have to remember that this is the way of seeing of a Dzogchen practitioner. If one lives limited and boxed in to

some level of teaching, then that's not the case for you. But you have to therefore understand, see through, all the limits, also the limits of traditions and systems.

If for example you follow the Vinaya, and you're thoroughly convinced of that method and its principles, you become a monk. Having become a monk, it's your obligation to follow the rules that govern monks. Why? Because you've received those vows. In the vows it's said for example that one must not kill any living being, any animal. There's a perfectly clear justification. You mustn't kill any animal because that creates suffering. That creates disturbance for that being.

You've taken that vow. You've taken the vow that you shall not kill any type of being for any reason whatsoever, and that vow is binding until death. If I live in that dimension, governed by that vow, that can't possibly correspond with some other understanding that says "No, it is permitted to kill a being."

For example it's explained in the Mahayana Sutras, it's in that case not an absolute, an absolute interdiction of killing some being, but rather a question of one's action, value, depending on one's intentions. Intention is what governs the judgment. It's explained there with the example of a merchant who had a very good intention and killed someone in order to save the lives of five hundred of his companions. And this was to prevent the individual whom it was also, not only to save the potential victims, but also to prevent the individual who would have committed the action from performing an evil act.

So this man killed someone and yet his action was judged as positive. This means there's another way of seeing, another yard stick for measurement, a more open way of seeing. Which means that one is outside the limits of a vow or a rule. So each way of seeing has its own particular characteristics.

If one has received an initiation of a practice, let's say, like Kriyatantra, one has promised to recite a certain mantra and to practice a certain visualization. If that individual then goes to someone, to a master who is thoroughly convinced of Kriyatantra, and announces "Oh I do a kind of Guruyoga in the Dzogchen style. Is that adequate and does that permit me to cease practicing this Kriyatantra initiation?" You can be quite sure that that master of Kriyatantra will say "No, that's not sufficient." Because that's the path of Kriyatantra. He may not even know what the principle of Dzogchen is. But this too has to be understood. And the way of seeing Dzogchen means that you understand that also.

The practitioner of Dzogchen has to be in a certain sense an ideal person. That is, he doesn't let himself be conditioned. He doesn't complicate his own life too much. He does his best, always collaborating and cooperating with himself. I'm not saying that when one begins to practice Dzogchen, one has to drop all one's prior practices and substitute for them a Guruyoga. If you are able to, you can certainly do all the practices you want, hundreds of them. Unfortunately and it's too bad, people don't do that.

What you have to do is understand very clearly what your

actual situation and condition is and what it permits. The problem is that in your real situation you have to act, to do your best, that is, to bring the transmissions and teachings you've received to a level where you can maintain them rather than letting go of them and allowing this to become an obstacle and an impediment.

In such a case the Guruyoga is a very, very important indeed. Because whatever vehicle, tradition, level of transmission or teaching, teaching is always aimed at helping you move towards realization. And realization always must come about through development of the transmission. That's the same at every level. But it's not so very easy to do hundreds of Guruyogas.

But moreover the importance of Guruyoga doesn't really lie in the words or the forms and images with which it's presented. The true point of a Guruyoga is to accomplish or find the unification of the state of the master and the state of the individual himself. That means a master transmitted a knowledge. That knowledge links you to all of the lineage of the transmission. Thus my knowledge, my state of knowledge, is linked to all of that lineage, all of the transmission.

Let's say it's like I'm a little electric plug. And I'm plugged into the whole powerful cable of transmission to light the lamp. I have to maintain this, not pull the plug out of the wall. In some way I have to develop and maintain that light. In this case it's of absolutely no importance who's there, which transmission, what master is more important, what master is less important, or any of that we human beings are usually very habituated to do, attributing more importance to some individuals and less importance to others.

But that has to do with the outward position, the situation also of the physical material body. It has nothing to do with the spiritual content and value of persons. So Guruyoga doesn't proceed in that fashion. Many people think that Guruyoga is for giving importance or paying homage to a certain individual, as if for example this is our recognition of our chief, the head of our school.

In fact every one of the schools presents Guruyoga in this way. If you're Kagyudpa, you think immediately "Ah we have to do a Guruyoga with Milarepa, or with Marpa, or with Gampopa, or with the Karmapa" or some such being. It has to be recognized. If that individual then receives a teaching from a Gelugpa master, he gives him another Guruyoga with Tsong Khapa. If that individual has a little faith in both of them, now he's got a little problem. He says "Well maybe I'd better do the Gelugpa Guruyoga in the evening. The Kagyudpa one I'll do in the morning. Because if I do them together, gee, who knows what will happen?"

So this is how we are. We put everything in conflict. And we create these conflicts primarily on matters of external form. Also you see a thangka of Milarepa, and a thangka of Tsong Khapa and they're not the same. So we constantly work at increasing these limitations.

Whereas these things, these considerations, have no relevance whatsoever to transmission. Transmission means something beyond these limitations. If I have transmissions from Gelugpas, from Bonpos, from Kagyudpas, from Nyingmapas,

these limitations have no meaning whatsoever. They all have to be unified. The unification of these transmissions, the cultivation and development of this transmission, is in my own interest. One mustn't imagine that when one does a Guruyoga, some master is pleased by that. If one is doing that, the Guruyoga for the master, it's absolutely the opposite of the real principle.

If it's genuinely in the interest of the individual practitioner, him or herself, then it's very, very important that you not limit yourself. I'm not just talking about unifying teachers of all the Buddhist schools. If it's not Buddhist at all, that's all alright too. In the state we say all beings from the very origins are totally realized. If this is in fact true how can we possibly begin to judge them and discriminate among them? We're working a bit to develop this principle.

So Guruyoga in which are present and unified all of the masters and teachers of all the lineages above all that you've had contact with, that have reached you, is extremely important. And for the form the image which represents that, you can use any image. Above all it's very important that one know how to do the practice with the various forms of yidams, or herukas.

For example if someone were to ask me "Can I do a practice of Vajrakilaya?" You can be sure I would say "Yes." But I would say "You can do that practice through Guruyoga." If the person replies "No, I like to do the practice of Vajrakilaya with all of the details of the transformation as is normally done." Then I would say "First of all you have to ask for and receive a Tantric initiation. And then when you've received that Tantric initiation, I'll explain how you must visualize it, what the details of practice will be."

Do you understand why this is? Because when one teaches the Dzogchen teaching, that means that communication itself is transmission. Through that transmission one can enter into the practice of any transformation. Because all of the transformations of any kind and description have from the beginning been self-perfected for that individual. So in this method it's sufficient that one recognize what one is, that one is already that. This means how to practice these transformations in a way linked with the transmission of Dzogchen.

But the transmissions of Dzogchen have not said that that is the same as the initiation in transformation, in Tantra. On the path of transformation, in Tantra, there's a way of doing each thing. In this red book we have a series of ways of practicing Sihamukha, Guru Drago, etc. The principle is that one recognizes the self-perfectedness of these manifestations in oneself. And through this recognition one can manifest as any one of these in an instant. And through this one can proceed at the end to contemplation.

This is the system of Anuyoga. And this is perfectly compatible with the transmission of Dzogchen. You learn how you have to manifest. And you want, you need, transmission of the mantra because the mantra is linked to sound and is transmitted through sound. So these practices are linked with transmissions.

So in the way of seeing of Dzogchen, a Guruyoga contains everything. The manifestation of the Guruyoga, that is, the form that you employ, can be dakinis, heruka, Dharmakaya style, Sambhogakaya style, Nirmanakaya style, whatever, because all that is already self-contained and perfected. If I don't possess knowledge of the principle, the principle of knowledge of the unification of the state, the state of all of the masters and my own state in that transformation, then even if I think I'm doing a Guruyoga, I'm very far from this.

The same is true if I'm doing a practice of transformation of let us say an important, a very important heruka. If I don't have the principle of the unification of the state in that transformation, it's very difficult that this transformation become real. So even if we do transformation it's always based on the principle of the Guruyoga. In this way everything becomes more concrete, more real.

So the form, the image, that one employs, or the form that one employs, doesn't count very much. Very often for us we simply use that which is most convenient or with which we happen to be most familiar. In Guruyoga we very much employ the image of Padmasambhava for example. Very often we do Guruyoga with the image of Vajrasattva, and also in the Dharmakaya style with the figure of Samantabhadra. If we're doing a practice like shinay, we can very often base that or begin that with the figure of Samantabhadra alone, a Guruyoga, and then proceed into contemplation.

Certain types of practice such as the one that we've spoken of this morning, the Longde, and many practices, many methods of practice of the Upadesha series of Dzogchen teachings, we do many of those with a visualization the figure of Samantabhadra yabyum or the figure of Dorjesempa yabyum.

It's not said moreover that we must always do a dualistic visualization. It may also be that one's self transforms into this state, as is done in the practice of the herukas. The principle is always the unification of the states. And this state is what we find in contemplation. And this we can say is an extreme form of Guruyoga. So it's very important to do a Guruyoga.

Moreover when we do a Guruyoga we don't just leave it as a matter of words and images. Otherwise we're not doing anything. For example, somebody says "I did a beautiful ngondro." In a ngondro practice there's a Guruyoga that may require reciting four or five pages. In the first years you do the visualization in full, shut within a house with the door closed. After a few years you don't manage the visualization very well because you're in a hurry. You've got too much to do but you certainly read off the words. Then after a certain further period you give up the Guruyoga altogether because you just don't have the time. You say you just can't make it.

Then we say "Yes, I used to at the beginning of practice also do Guruyoga." It's almost as if one has developed beyond that, become more elevated, and transcended Guruyoga. Many people think of something like the ngondro as a kind of passageway or transitional phase. Now people think "Now I've gone beyond that. I'm more elevated. I practice the

Vajrayogini practice" or "I do Khorlo Dechog" or whatever. But they think they've gone much beyond a Guruyoga. All this is not true.

Rather than being conditioned by words and images, forms, one has to understand the principle of the underlying state. One has to know for example there are many ways of doing the Guruyoga. A Guruyoga can be done without a word. It can take five long minutes, ten minutes. You can do a Guruyoga for fifteen minutes, for an hour, for five seconds, or for one second, or even for less time than it takes to smoke a cigarette. So you can do a Guruyoga at any moment that you're aware, that you're present. So it's very, very important, and every time you've done a Guruyoga, you've taken a step to deepen and cultivate the transmission.

If one intends to do a practice of contemplation, you always guide into it with a Guruyoga. Even if you do just the minimum, a moment of shinay, that begins with the presence of a Guruyoga. So it becomes a bit like the individual's habit. You don't have to display or exhibit anything about doing a Guruyoga. You have to understand that the principle of the Guruyoga is the unification of the state, the state of the masters, the unity of all their states and your own underlying state.

When we want some means for fixing on this consideration, then we use a word, the word AH. We can for example if you want to just suddenly do this, you can concentrate on the AH at the middle of the body within the thigle, the white luminous AH. Because this white AH is the same one that we utilize as we said in the practice of the night. And so to link, to coordinate, the AH with which you fell asleep with the morning state, as soon as you awaken you seek to remember the white AH at the heart center.

So at any and every moment that one wants to have awareness and the presence, the sense of this Guruyoga, one can concentrate on this white AH, and that in turn helps have more awareness of it for the night practice. This white AH represents the state of unification of all of the transmissions of all of the masters.

One can also sound the AH. We've also said, you'll remember, that sounding the AH facilitates our being brought into the state of contemplation. But you don't need a lot of time to do a Guruyoga of this kind. You can do that in the instant that the idea of doing it comes to you, while you're walking, while you're doing something, or otherwise occupied. If you do it, a Guruyoga, a hundred times a day, that's fine. You can never do it too often.

So as often as possible, whenever the occasion presents itself, you try to have the sense, the presence, an immediacy, of this Guruyoga. This is extremely profitable for the practitioner in every way, for developing his knowledge, for developing the transmission in all senses and in all ways.

So in the red book we have at the beginning, on page one, we have something called the rabtu tromay (rab-tu spros-med). Rabtu tromay means, as we've already explained, super without concept or form. By no means is it said that you have to visualize the rather complicated image that's on this page. Because we're all addicted to doing everything over-precisely.

All that's there is an AH. And behind this Tibetan letter AH that's white is a black western letter AH. All that this is saying is that's it's enough that it be an AH. It doesn't even have to be a Tibetan AH. Because if somebody doesn't know how to read a Tibetan character, then it's infinitely better that it be the AH that you know how to read. The reason we visualize the AH is because as soon as you see an AH, an A, you have the association with its sound, the sound AH, which is a neutral sound governing other sounds.

Then on page two, the back of that same page, we have the song of the vajra. This is how we do the practice of Guruyoga as we move from it into contemplation. This does not mean that obligatorily whenever you've sounded the AH, you must then absolutely sing the song of the vajra. I can perfectly well do a Guruyoga while I'm riding in a bus full of people. If I'm in the middle of the bus and I start going "Emakiri kiri", no. People will be all rather surprised.

If on the other hand I am alone and there's the opportunity to go from the Guruyoga on to contemplation or to extend the Guruyoga so as to facilitate entry into contemplation, I can very well sing "Emakiri kiri". The song of the vajra is not some type of prayer. Nor am I concentrating on some dualistic visualization of a Guruyoga with the image of some master to whom I'm praying.

Rather I now am in the state that my master transmitted to me. I'm in the state of contemplation. Because unifying the state of the masters and my own state is not like putting together two things which are different. That knowledge which he brought to me, which he communicated to me, is integrated in, is one with, my knowledge. And this presence, this awareness, is unification of the state, and it's that in which I am in at that point.

And that's what I'm developing right now. And its continuation, staying in that state, is linked for me with the sound of the song of the vajra. The song of the vajra is what we call a natural sound of the vajra. These are not words which were pronounced originally by some physical body. We've already spoken of transmission by way of the manifestation of transformation. But that's not only visual. There can also be the sound of that dimension of transformation. And that type of sound we call the natural sound of the vajra. Many mantras which accompany transformation exist at this level.

Now this type of song of the vajra does surely have its word by word and line by line meaning. Many people say "I like it, when I say things, to know what it is I'm saying." This is very reasonable and very intelligent. But it means working with the mind. Here instead we're concerned with the dimension of contemplation, not with reasoning. We're using this song of the vajra to bring ourselves to, and to guide us to, contemplation.

What's being done here, the principal function as we sing the song, is, one, that we're taking ourselves into the dimension of contemplation, and two, that we're charging certain energies with the power of mantra. This mantra comes principally from what's called the Tantra of the Thodrol (thos-grol). You've heard in association with the Book of the Dead of something called thodrol. Tho means to hear, to

listen, and drol means that one liberates; so liberation by hearing. As one hears, one liberates. And the principal example of that is this very mantra, this song of the vajra.

There's something else again which is called tagdrol (btags-grol). Tag means to wear on the body, and drol means still to liberate. Something can be prepared to be worn on the body to create a good cause for eventual liberation. Particularly in the case of those who die, above all to aid those individuals and particularly individuals who don't practice, there is prepared what is called the khorlo ('khor-lo) of the tagdrol, which is put on the body. It's worn by the body. And the principal and most powerful mantra that's put in that khorlo is this one, the song of the vajra.

But it's not only used to be put on the body of the dead or to be heard by the dead. There's one of the the most important Tantras of the Upadesha which is called Nyida Khajor (nyi-zla kha-sbyor). It gives many explanations which give major importance to this mantra. And this mantra also has its significance in helping individuals into contemplation.

Above all it's explained when one tries to do contemplation and doesn't succeed, it becomes very useful and important to sing this. Through sound one also is helped or carried into contemplation. When you find defects in your contemplation, for example you're too agitated, nervous, or you're too drowsy and you lack clarity, and obstacles and impediments arise, whenever any of these difficulties or problems arises, rather than insist on going ahead with contemplation, you pause to sing the song of the vajra.

Also when the difficulty is created in the transmission between the master and disciple, or between the connection between disciple and disciple, or between the practitioner and the guardians of the teaching, all of these problems which may arise are overcome through the song of the vajra. The song of the vajra is understood as one of the most important means of all. And you can be quite sure that it works. As a practical matter it has its result.

If we know more or less what's involved in contemplation, if in that state of contemplation, one sings and begins with emakiri kiri, and arrives at the end of the song without distracting oneself from that state of contemplation, that's already a very considerable duration or period of time to have carried on contemplation.

In the Sutras the Buddha explains that the period of time it takes an ant to climb from the point of the nose to the bridge of the nose, which is to say a very brief period of time indeed, if you've succeeded in contemplating for that short a time, that's more important than an entire lifetime of good actions and dedication to the accumulation of merit.

It's true because to apply contemplation is part of the accumulation of wisdom. And one realizes oneself accumulating on the path of wisdom, that is, applying contemplation. But one doesn't realize oneself just performing good actions. Good actions simply take one to the path of wisdom. So if one has a minimal capacity to apply contemplation, in such a case, applying it as much as possible is very important. And thus for us the song of the vajra governed by contemplation is optimal practice.

Then let's take somebody who's very easily distracted, always conditioned by various thoughts. Such a person can't maintain contemplation for the duration of the song of the vajra. So the song itself guides and gives a guideline for the length of time.

Then in the Tantra of Dzogchen, it's also explained that the song of the vajra is linked to one's force, to one's energies. And realization also means that we have to realize our whole dimension, our pure and impure vision. And this has to come about through reintegration, and that's through the working of energy. And energy is linked with, through something like the song of the vajra.

So it is said that any place where the song of the vajra has been sung becomes a sacred place. It is said that in any place where the song of the vajra is sung, there are automatically present thousands of dakinis. That thousands of dakinis are present means that there's been an immense concentration of energy there. Concentration of energy is the way that the individual integrates. This is why we constantly sing the song of the vajra. To develop our contemplation and also to help practice become something very concrete.

So the song of the vajra really is very important. I'm not the author. You can learn very well also from the Tantras where it's explained. For some of you who don't have the transmission of the sound, this is a mantra. I'll read it. [recitation]. There are several different versions or editions of this song of the vajra. Above all in different texts, like different terma texts, there are slightly different words. But this is an edition or a version which existed and was sung in Adzomgar, and was also used by my master Changchub Dorje. So I use it. So I have the habit of using it this way.

It's considered to be in the language of Oddiyana. Some of the words are the same in Sanskrit. But this is characteristic of the language of Oddiyana. The actual meaning of these words is contained in verses. It's translated in the Tantra. This is the practice on pages one and two that bears the title rabtu tromay.

The title of this book you'll read is tun. Tun means a limited or specific period of practice that one does. For example, in the evening we do collective practice. We sit down and we do a tun of practice. It begins with the Guruyoga. After the Guruyoga we manifest as a Heruka. This too is always linked with the Guruyoga. So when you do that same tun in a very abbreviated fashion, that's this first practice. Then you can do it longer and still longer if you're somebody who has lots of free time. In general it's easy to elaborate things, make them longer. Because life is always passed in time.

One meets today one master, tomorrow another, the day after another. When children find themselves near a big river where there are a lot of pretty rocks, or stones, or pebbles, you find certain really lovely pebbles. And then going farther you find another prettier one. At the end they can't carry all the pebbles home.

So in the teaching there are lots of very pretty practices, beautiful practices. One thinks "Oh wow. This is

beautiful. This is lovely. This is terrific." At a certain point you're lost in all of this beauty. And then you lose it all. For that reason you have to well understand what's the maximum possible compression, and not limit yourself in lots of ways. It's better to do something very very simple that you can do. That's the simplest there is. Ok, now yantra.

[Saturday morning, 24-Jul-82]

Now we'll talk a bit about the practice of Dzogchen Upadesha. Yesterday we explained a bit about how you do the practice of the Semde and Longde teachings. And then we've been proceeding with the way of practicing Upadesha beginning with the rushan. And after that there are many practices of Upadesha linked with the mind, and also there's what we call the semzin. In particular of the semzin there are 21 of which we also have a transcript here.

These practices of the semzin are also not entirely a preparation. But they're rather a precise method for finding oneself in the lived knowledge of rigpa. They can also be considered as means for correcting contemplation. Let's say you have an idea of contemplation, a notion of contemplation, that includes whatever state, let's say the state of naypa, or a state of hedewa, of startledness. You might easily confuse yourself and say "Now this is rigpa." In this case with many of the semzin, beginning to use them a bit, you understand that this is not rigpa.

As we've often said, contemplation is outside the measure of mind. Also in the Sutra, Buddha is explaining the Prajnaparamita. This means beyond intellect, and also beyond words and beyond measurement. And contemplation is exactly like that.

So a large part of one's knowledge of contemplation must derive from experience. In order to proceed into experience, there's an oral explanation of how you do, what you do. And this is exactly why there exist all these semzin. And these semzin can continue to be used also long after one has begun to contemplate. Above all if one does a personal retreat of Dzogchen practice, without limiting yourself, you'll do a retreat without programming what it is you do, so you know perfectly well that what you do is contemplation.

And that contemplation will be carried ahead and deepened through various practices of Guruyoga for example. If you have a lot of knowledge of different practices, then during such a retreat, you can train yourself by practicing them, above all by using all of the types of semzin, and at times also such practices as mantra. Because if you just remain only in a state like shinay, you can easily tire of that. And if you are suffocated, or suffocate yourself, there's no development of contemplation.

So these semzin are valuable both when one is in retreat, and also after a long experience with practice. But the major part of the semzin always employ a method where you work through the mind and then get to contemplation. For which reason you mustn't confound the semzin and think that they are contemplation. We call this a method for developing contemplation, a method for finding yourself in contemplation. So the principal consideration, the fundamental practice, is always contemplation.

We've already explained a good deal about what contemplation is. Above all we've explained how you must find yourself in the state of rigpa, and how you must distinguish the nyams from the state of rigpa. Similarly, yesterday, we explained in the teaching of Semde, the states of naypa, migyowa, and rigpa. And this state of rigpa, which is inseparable from and laced through the states of naypa and migyowa, is the state of contemplation. Finding oneself in that state, and a way of continuing in that state, is called in the Upadesha teachings trecho ('khregs-chod).

What does trecho mean as a word? Tre means that there's no variation or deviation. If there were a line, it would be continuous without any branches turning off from it, without anything going left or right from it. Cho means to pass. Cho is also commonly the past tense of "to cut". If I have to travel a certain distance, and if I've already put that distance behind me and arrived at my destination, we say cho, I've passed through. I've cut through. I've broken through.

We know, speaking of paths, that there are many paths. There's the gradual path. And on the gradual path, there's always an explanation of the first passage or transition, the second passage or transition, the third one, and so forth, and how you get ahead stage by stage.

In the Dzogchen teaching the principle is knowledge. And of this knowledge, we can say that when one finds oneself in that knowledge as a practical fact, living that knowledge, this is the base, this is the path, this is the fruit. For which reason we say that the Dzogchen teaching is a single passage or transition or phase. It's a single level. It's a single bhumis.

For example in the system of the Mahayana Sutras, there's an explanation of five paths, five ways. And the Bodhisattvas move from the first bhumis to the tenth bhumis. In Tantrism, in addition to this, there are other ways of explaining. Some traditions of the bumtrul (??), of the Mayatantra, explain 21 bhumis or levels. And it's as if one is reaching these levels one after the other. This is a way of seeing to which we're more or less all accustomed and habituated.

But when you explain that from the place you are, you arrive, having arrived you're at the same point, this is called trecho. The point of departure and the arrival point are one and the same. Cho means you've passed through. It means that already. The point of departure is our condition as we are. And our arrival point, our destination, is in full knowledge being where and what we are.

And this is the famous state of rigpa. And this is knowing the unification, or the sameness of, naypa, migyowa and rigpa. And in this state, we continue. This is the last statement of Garab Dorje: "So continue in this state of knowledge." In the Upadesha, what is principally explained is just this.

Introduction is made through understanding of the base. And if there's understanding of the base, then one tries to find oneself in that condition, in that state, and this is above all effectuated by grasping the distinction between, and making the distinction between, the nyam, experiencing, and the rigpa.

And working with the characteristics of mitogpa, of void or calm of mind, working with the characteristics of clarity, working with the characteristics of sensation and feeling, one gets beyond any doubt about the knowledge of, the understanding of, exactly what rigpa is. Then when one has this knowledge, one continues. And the way of continuing is called the four chogzhag.

You'll remember that in the Longde we spoke of four da. The four da are guidelines primarily to having a direct experience so that you are no longer in doubt, so that you'll remain beyond doubt.

Similarly in the Semde we had the four naljor, or we say four contemplations. These were above all to enter into the knowledge of contemplation applied one by one. For example, they lead one initially to take a given position. Then doing a fixation. Then slowly relaxing the fixation in order to regulate or govern the mind. And this takes you to knowing finally what actually is a state of naypa or mitogpa.

Then these guidelines lead you to slowly grasping that there is movement in the mind, and lead you to govern or master this movement of mind through fixation. Therefore at a certain moment it takes you to exactly the presence, or immediate awareness, of both the state of movement and this state of naypa. It's a way of working that proceeds progressively, just like teaching A, and then B, and then C, and then D. So this is a way, very much, of practicing and of applying what is called introduction.

Now you have to understand that the four chogzhag of which we're speaking now, is a way of continuing, not a way of entering into or being introduced to the knowledge. Today, these times, many people who've heard a bit about Dzogchen or had a bit of teaching of it, think immediately that the way of entering into Dzogchen, or practicing Dzogchen, is something called the four chogzhag.

But that's not how it is. Because the four chogzhag is specifically a method in the Dzogchen Upadesha teachings for continuing. But a way of continuing implies of course that there's something to continue. You have to have the knowledge. Otherwise there's nothing to continue. Therefore when we speak of the four chogzhag, the person at least knows what is meant by contemplation.

Why do we specify and use the name trecho? Because in the Upadesha there's also another method which is called thogay. But that doesn't mean that thogay is a higher method and trecho is less important. That's not the principle. Rather, thogay is a way of developing the knowledge of trecho. And if you're going to develop, you have to have something to develop.

Let's take someone who perhaps doesn't even know what is meant by contemplation, or himself is still in full doubt, or if this is not so, is someone who hasn't even begun to apply the practice of trecho. To such a person, talking of thogay makes no sense at all. Because the practice of thogay requires that one's trecho be very precise. It means that one is very familiar with this practice. Familiar means not just when you shut your eyes and sit somewhere in meditation. But rather that contemplation has become integrated into your life

and arises spontaneously. That's what we mean by beginning to be familiar with the practice.

And it's not enough that contemplation be familiar. It also has to ripen. That is, it's not enough to know that water has become ice. Ice has to melt a bit. In practice, from there, there is a method of development. And for that we have the thogay. In such a case thogay becomes, yes, a bit more elevated. Masters who know thogay consider it an advanced method, or specialized method, rather than a common one. Because an individual who practices it must genuinely have a capacity, or familiarity, in order to develop.

We're used to chasing the teaching as if we're getting a technique, as if we're asking for a technique of some kind. But that's not how the teaching functions. Because that which is taught is also linked to the spirit of he who teaches. A teacher knowing the individual, and knowing what is the individual, and seeing the needs of people, and what can help and benefit them, surely offers everything he can, gives and does his very best to help them. But it isn't always very positive just believing. That is, it isn't always very positive to do what you believe is positive or what seems positive.

For example, if for example he is communicating to, let's say, a hundred people, the hundred people are not all the same. Among the hundred people, there are those who feel they're receiving a teaching. Whereas there are many people who are listening to a chat. And there are many people who are there with the curiosity of seeing what it's all about. A master who is communicating a teaching is not like somebody who's making a political speech. Therefore even if he's full of compassion for others and wanting to help them, he's not always disposed to give certain things.

For certain types of practice, such as the trecho and above all the thogay, one has to know the precise condition and situation of the individual and his willingness to work. For example when I received the teaching from my master, my master underlined and emphasized how important it was that I have precision, exactness, complete familiarity, with the trecho before practicing thogay.

Certainly I received the teaching of thogay, how one does that practice, not only from my master, but I received it also from other masters. I received it in many different ways. I also received it from a master who was simply reading from a text. And I also received it from masters who explained in detail, item by item, how it's done.

But what counts is practice, doing the practice. And to do the practice, and to have it be profitable and useful to you, it's clearly understood that you have to be very familiar, and very precise, very accurate, in trecho. This is not in the interests of the master. It's in the interest of he who practices. It's not like some kind of technique for self assembly of a machine or something of the kind. You have to have a very precise situation with yourself.

Knowing this, I, until after my arrival in Italy, had never actually done the practice of thogay, that is to say, many years, not just a few years. It's not that I didn't do the practice because it didn't interest me. I was very very

interested in the thogay, and I knew very well that it was very important. But I also have the principle of helping myself, of cooperating with myself. And therefore I did no practice beyond, or other than, trecho. It was quite enough for me to practice trecho.

Thus many years passed. And then one night after many years, I dreamed of my master. This is about eleven years ago. I was in Italy dreaming, and I dreamed that night that I was arriving in Tibet. And I arrived exactly where my master lived in his village. I felt immediately in the dream, felt very freshly, very immediately, that I'd just come back from Italy. I was a bit worried. I was concerned. I was saying to myself "Who knows if there are a lot of Chinese soldiers around. And they might have inspections and catch me here."

So warily looking right and left, I got to the house of my master. When I came into the house, my master greeted me and he commented that it had been many years since we had seen each other, and he asked me how I was, and how I was doing. And he asked me "How's your practice going?" And I told him that I tried to do the practice as much as possible of trecho working with the four chogzhag.

And he asked "But haven't you done the practice of thogay?" I said "No I haven't yet done that." "Why not?" he said. "Because you told me" I said "that I must have my trecho very stable, very precise, very familiar." "Well" he said "it's very important that you do the practice of thogay." I said "I know it's important." He said "Well, if you have some doubts that have to be resolved, you have to practice."

In any case from that point, I began to put a bit into practice my knowledge of the thogay. And then think a bit how many years I waited to practice thogay. What this means is helping yourself, cooperating with yourself, not considering oneself as some kind of machine, and these practices as techniques for operating the machine.

So what's really very important, what's truly important, is continuing and deepening contemplation, and becoming fully familiar with it. And the the practice of thogay is a practice based above all on vision. If you're not fully familiar with contemplation, you can actually create problems for yourself. You can create problems for yourself without knowing it. And then if you don't enter the practice in the precisely correct way, you can block it for yourself, and block yourself. And if it's blocked, that's really too bad. Therefore this is not something that's normally communicated to just anybody.

And then there's also another consideration or motivation involved in teaching certain things. If you read the history, the stories and biographies of the masters, in the history of the Longde practice of Dzogchen, there's a very famous disciple of Vairocana called Pang Mipham Gonpo (spangs mi-pham mgon-po), one of the most famous of those persons who became the bodies of light. And his disciple became a body of light. And from disciple to disciple, they became body of light.

Four generations passed in which the successive disciples became the body of light, for which reason the Longde became a very important and recognized teaching. After

that last disciple, there was no more body of light. Yes many other important things were manifested. And in the histories, in the chronicles, it is said why there was no more body of light. Because that last disciple was a bit different from other disciples. The prior disciples had been people very simple, lived in very humble circumstances.

That last one who did not achieve the body of light was someone surrounded by disciples. And in Tibetan it's written "And the body of light did not happen because of tsogpachang ??" Tsogpa means a group, or a hoard, of people, many people who followed him. And chang ?? means that one gives teaching, advice, and help.

Does that mean one can't have disciples? One can have all the disciples one wants. And nothing will happen that will affect the body of light. But you can't understand, it's not possible to judge, whether all the disciples are perfect or not. Even if you put hundreds of guards or police, you can't discover that.

Somebody might today feel that he's very serious indeed, and tomorrow he doesn't feel so serious. In this way a problem is created between master and disciple. And when that problem is created, nothing else may happen. But an obstacle arises, Since human nature is like that. This is why the masters proceed with such extreme prudence, meeting with two people, and slowly finding a third one, and then and only then explaining or teaching certain things. In general the situation is like that.

When we speak of the four chogzhag and the way of continuing in contemplation, there are two different interpretations. One is an intellectual way of explaining, the other is a way of describing them in practice. We rather go into practice. And we can also try to help people understand a bit intellectually how this is. This above all so that our Tibetologists when they read books in Tibetan will understand.

The four chogzhag. Chogzhag means "let be what is". Because the principle of Dzogchen from the very beginning is machopa (ma-bcos-pa), not correcting anything, let it be. And so in contemplation one also uses this term chogzhag, let be what is. And there are four of these chogzhag.

The first chogzhag is called the riwo chogzhag. Ri means mountain. Riwo means big mountain, great mountain. And chogzhag means let be like a mountain, let it be like the mountain. In practice what does that mean? It means that one doesn't correct or in any way limit the body. In the moment of the presence, the awareness of, contemplation, you let the body be as you find it. That is, it's not conditioned, or controlled, or subjected to any rule or limitation.

When we see mountains, there are mountains of many different shapes and forms. Some are high. Some are low. But they're all relaxed, grounded in their condition as mountains. We know that a mountain always has some kind of peak. And it always rests on a wide base. We never find mountains the other way, resting on the peaks. And this means relaxed onto their base, grounded, in their situation. In practice riwo chogzhag means that the body is not conditioned. You find it as it is.

Then as regards the more intellectual explanation, it's explained that one is as if at the peak of a mountain, in the condition of one who finds himself at the peak and has before him the entire panorama. He sees the heights and the depths, the mountains and the valleys, as if the panorama from a high place. And if he looks down and sees some narrow path, a very limited path like that of renunciation, for example, such a path can't go beyond its limitations. It's as if one had before one on such a path a hill that one couldn't get over. But if instead you find yourself on the peak of a very high mountain, you also see those lower hills. You know what their situation is. So this refers to the limitless view of one who is at the peak of the mountain, who has around him all of the openness of space.

There are many explanations in regard to this. There's a Tantra of the Upadesha called the Senge Tsaldzog (seng-ge rtsal-rdzogs), and in this Tantra it's said that knowledge of Dzogchen is like one being on a mountain. From the highest peak one looks down and sees all of the lesser categories of mountains. But none of these categories of mountains, none of these mountain heights, is in any way mysterious or hidden for he who finds himself on the highest peak. And none of these mountains, none of these peaks, is capable of conditioning, of affecting, he who finds himself on the higher peak. There's a long explanation of this kind.

And intellectually this corresponds to what we've spoken of, the riwo chogzhag, the chogzhag of the mountain. But this is the intellectual scholarly way, philosophical way, of studying this. Because when I'm doing contemplation, I'm certainly not involved with thinking about being on the mountain, or not being on the mountain, being limited or not limited, what I can see or not see. None of that. So it really isn't very relevant to contemplation.

But what is linked truly to contemplation, and what you must remember is, to relax the body in the position it finds itself in. And in this case the example of the mountain is valid for our body. So from this point of view, there's nothing so very complicated to get into and study about the riwo chogzhag.

Then there's a second chogzhag. It's called the gyatso chogzhag (rgya-mtsho cog-bzhag). Gyatso means the ocean. And chogzhag means here let be like the ocean. Here the intellectual explanation takes up the theme of how in the ocean all of the stars are reflected. So there's a reflection of all of space in which the stars shine without limitation, in that total openness. That is, anything can be reflected in the ocean, just as we always say of the mirror. Whatever may be reflected, it doesn't condition the mirror, and yet there's all that space available. So in this way you find yourself in contemplation with a total presence or awareness. That's the usual intellectual explanation.

In practice the ocean is emblematic of the eyes. This is a rather secret name in Dzogchen for the eyes. And this is a name used above all in the practice of thogay. Chogzhag means again let be what is. This means leave the eyes, let the eyes be, as they are. In general whatever practice we do, we ask "What's the position? What's the way of looking? What's the

breathing?" These are the principal guidelines that are explained in general as regards practice.

For example in the Longde, one of the das is where you're looking. You're looking into space. Similarly in the Semde you begin with fixation on an object, and then without an object.

Now to the question "How must the eyes be?", the answer is "let them be as they are." And "let them be as they are" means the nature of eyes is to be open. The eyes are there for seeing, not to be shut. So it means the eyes are open. There's no statement at all as to where you have to look in particular.

There are practices like namkha artay. In that case you look into space. But here there's no statement as to where you look. The statement is "you let the eyes be open". In the Upadesha it's always said that the eyes are the gates of wisdom. And wisdom means vision. And therefore the eyes have to be open. And that's the gyatso chogzhag. In practice it's very simple.

The third is what's called the rigpa chogzhag. Rigpa means that state which is found integrated with migyowa and naypa. You already know that. Distinguishing very clearly what is the mind from what is rigpa, and distinguishing very clearly what is the nyam from what is rigpa, and with this state of rigpa present, you continue. You don't do anything with that consciousness. You don't charge or work on that awareness. You just chogzhag. You let it be. That's rigpa chogzhag.

Then the last is the nangwa chogzhag. Nangwa means vision, seeing. Vision doesn't mean that necessarily there's to come some strange vision or apparition of light or something of the kind. When we speak of vision, we have also pure vision and impure vision. When we're in an open place, we see mountains, we see animals, we see trees, and so forth. Here in this house, we have a vision of all that which we see around us. This is our karmic vision. This is our impure vision at the level of our tsal, that which apparently presents itself. And there's nothing to renounce about it. There's nothing to get rid of. Rather one finds oneself in the reintegration of that energy.

So in the presence, in the awareness, of the state of rigpa, with the present sense of the state of rigpa, in the karmic vision as it presents itself, without altering anything, without changing, or renouncing, or doing anything, one just lets be. One lets be what is. In fact in this way it is said "vision is the ornament of the state". The reflections can be the ornament when one finds oneself in the state of the mirror. When we find ourselves in the state of rigpa in contemplation, then vision, all that presents itself, is not capable of conditioning or affecting the individual. It's the ornament of that state.

Here we can also remember the words of Phadampa. He says that man is not conditioned by his vision, but by his attachment. So if one finds oneself in the state of rigpa, one is living in the state of rigpa, how one's energy manifests as tsal, as dang, as rolpa, one integrates with that, reintegrates it, and accepts it totally. And this is

called the nangwa chogzhag. And so now we've explained the four chogzhag. Riwo chogzhag, gyatso chogzhag, rigpa chogzhag, and nangwa chogzhag.

Now we've explained them one by one, but applying them isn't done one at a time. There are masters who, giving primarily an intellectual elaboration and explanation of these four chogzhag, seem to present them as if they were four ways of practicing. And these are linked to a method that is more like Tantrism. But in the real teaching of Dzogchen, the four chogzhag occur simultaneously. It all happens in the same moment.

If you're walking in a garden and there comes in that moment contemplation, you continue that contemplation through the four chogzhag. If you don't succeed, for example, you haven't yet integrated contemplation with movement sufficiently, you sit down on a bench. As soon as you've sat down, however you've happened to have sat down, riwo chogzhag. It's not that you sit down and then close your eyes. It's not that you make the vision around you disappear. All vision is still there. Your eyes are open. You're not seated in some special way, just seated on that bench. You have the presence, the awareness, of contemplation. That's the four chogzhag.

Some things are really very simple. Sometimes the simple itself becomes very difficult. To assemble a radio, if you're shown one operation at a time, it may not be so difficult to receive. But if somebody, instead of showing it, writes it out, how you assemble a radio, it becomes a book thick like that. If you go to read the book, it becomes very complicated indeed.

So sometimes it happens in this way that a simple matter becomes very very complicated. If you know well how to apply the four chogzhag, and then you have a bit of experience, then if you read books that give different interpretations, there's a meaning. So it's very important to know the four chogzhag.

Then, as to applying them, as we said yesterday, the ideal way is always through, or beginning with, a Guruyoga. When the idea of contemplation comes, you begin with a Guruyoga, and then continue in the four chogzhag. And this is how you can develop and cultivate contemplation in daily life. And then you train yourself also with movement, as we said yesterday.

It's not said that if you begin contemplation, you have to necessarily begin it sitting. If you're walking, and the idea of contemplation comes, or the fact of contemplation comes, the way to apply the chogzhag of the mountain is to continue walking. That's how you let be the body, and so you're a walking mountain. Or you may find that you're working, that you're doing some movement. And the mind always has this possibility, that it can move into that awareness which is contemplation. In any sense, in any moment or situation, you try maximally to train yourself in continuing in contemplation with the activity, whatever it may be.

When we see now people interested in teachings, and their way of being, and their way of practicing, we in general see two very different categories. We see one group of people who are very fixated on, let's say, if possible doing a very long

retreat of three years. And then we see another group of people who either are afraid of shutting themselves in for three years or if they don't have fear, don't feel like doing that.

But in that case you have to have a principle. It's not enough to just say "I don't like shutting myself up for three years." Because we know that when you do shut yourself in retreat for three years and practice, there is a benefit. So how can we balance that? How can we equal that?, we who don't shut ourselves up for three years... [tape gap] ... being indifferent and neglectful about it. We have to find a way of doing practice. This is what's meant by one learns, and through training oneself, to bring practice into movement and into daily life.

When we say "Let's do a retreat", at least I do this kind of retreat, I travel everywhere, dash about. We do a retreat with much explanation and collective practice. With all these retreats I do, all this effort I make, never has the idea that it's a kind of two or three weeks of getting away from it all, of resting from normal life's confusion. Nor is the idea that somebody comes, does a little practice, and then goes away, and accumulates, and slowly slowly constructs something.

The principle is rather, that we all collaborate, help ourselves and each other, to prepare for returning to normal daily life. The first day when we begin the retreat, we're saying "When it's over what will we be doing?". It's with that idea that we prepare. "How will I be able to do a practice when I get home, in my activity?" One makes oneself a bit familiar with certain things.

When we've explained for example, doing a breathing that's linked with the OM AH HUM, which we call reciting the vajra, it's to be understood that that's not just something you do while practicing seated and silent somewhere. While you're walking, you don't know what you should be doing. You can very easily be doing the reciting of the vajra.

You inhale with the OM. You hold your breath just a little with the awareness of the AH. And you exhale with the HUM. You repeat it again. You don't hold your breath long. You couldn't walk. You'd get tired very quickly. Nor do you make the OM and the HUM very long. You just do this with normal breathing pretty much. So you adjust the rhythm of your breathing to your walking as you go and have nothing else to do.

This is already a training in breathing. But it's also a breathing linked with the capacity and power of the mantra OM AH HUM. And since OM AH HUM is the essence of all mantras, there is quite certainly an enormous advantage owing to the functioning of this mantra.

It's not necessary always to pronounce aloud with the mouth OM AH HUM. Because mantra can be used in three ways, pronouncing it aloud, linking it with breathing as just described, or concentrating on the mantra at certain locations in the body like the chakras, where it links with the vital energy. And so sounding or reciting the vajra in this way with the breathing, working with the mantra, one receives a potentiation, an augment of one's clarity.

This power of mantra also diminishes obstacles. You'll

remember that when we do the purification of the six lokas, we're using this very OM AH HUM to purify. And certain traditions of the teaching also employ pronouncing, reciting, of this OM AH HUM as a purification. If one has become a bit familiar, self-trained, in reciting while walking, while moving, then breathing acquires almost automatically this sense, this impression, of the OM AH HUM.

It's not that it occupies some time or space. We can work. We can do anything while doing this. Nor is it "Wait a minute. I'm busy now doing the OM AH HUM." Nothing like that. So this is something so that you see that with a minimum of will, of intention, there are many many ways of utilizing practice and of bringing practice into life.

The same is true of contemplation. When you become a bit familiar with contemplation, now knowing how to do the four chogzhag, you can bring it into all moments and areas of life. While you don't succeed, when you don't succeed, in really bringing contemplation into your life, you can always try to not be distracted. Try to remain aware and present.

Until you succeed in bringing contemplation into movement and into all of your daily life, you can continue for example to do a few retreats, such as we're now doing. You can continue to work together, to collaborate together, do some practice together, to help yourself. This is the principle of a retreat. This is what a retreat serves for. A retreat is always preparation for living normally, for living your life.

So why do many people do something like a retreat for three years, for seven years? These such things do exist. Because they have practices to do like practices of transformation. On the path of transformation you really do need a quiet place where you can go to be left alone to visualize. It's not enough that I just think of something and it becomes concrete and real. To make the visualization real, I have to train myself a great great deal.

And for that to become concrete, the individual's energy has to intervene also. For this there are practices like tummo, and certain kinds of breathing, and certain mantric practices. So therefore at the end they obtain something concrete. And it's believing thusly, and who knows if they do obtain anything concrete, that they close themselves up for three years. Some people are there for seven years. That's the principle, and they are in fact following a method of practice.

We do things in a way that's a bit simpler and more normal. Normal, because as the Dzogchen teaching says, right from the beginning and right from the bottom, you have to let be what is. It's not that we're better. We don't know if we're better or maybe much worse. But at least we're trying. Everybody has got a right to try, and somebody might succeed. And if you do succeed, you've gained a lot. You've also avoided being shut up for three years.

If you don't succeed at anything, it's perhaps because it wasn't enough to just live in your fantasies. This all depends very much first of all on our knowledge. And secondly on our making that knowledge concrete, and then applying that in general, not letting oneself be distracted. That's what we do in general.

And then there's an aspect of the Dzogchen teaching, many people define it as a secret teaching. They say "You mustn't talk about it with people." On this point you have to understand something very well. It's not true that the teaching is a secret of which one must never speak to anyone. The teaching is something that you can very well speak of to someone who is interested in it.

In fact, you have to speak, you're obliged to tell about it to someone who is interested. Because the principle of the teaching is to understand oneself. If I can help an individual understand himself, I've done well. I haven't done harm. But that depends altogether on the individual, whether he's interested or not. It's not that I go and insist and try to convince that person. Because convincing or persuading somebody means conditioning that person.

And another aspect of the secrecy of the teaching is that certain things we don't just throw down any place. Somebody might say to himself "Well, there's nothing to hide. The teaching is intended to make itself understood." Let's take the example of one of these books of transcripts. These transcripts contain not only explanations about the way of seeing, the outlook, and that in fact one can share with anyone, but also contains items about practice, contains detailed discussions of practice and how to practice, and I might have this read by someone who isn't genuinely interested.

Or let's say I leave the book somewhere where it can be picked up and looked through by anybody, and I'm not concerned with it at all. Or two people who are interested in the practice and know a little bit about the practice are sitting talking somewhere like in a bar while drinking a beer. One of them is getting a little tipsy. Around the table and nearby tables are sitting various other people, people who have no interest and no connection at all. But they understand the language you're talking. If you were talking Tibetan, that would be all right. And that person is getting a little tipsy and half-drunk "You remember about those gyatso chogzhag was like?"

These things are no good. These such behaviors, all of these, really demonstrate a lack of respect for the teaching. We in general say that both the teaching and the teacher and the method of the teaching, these must be respected. You must regard these things with respect and take the care of them that you would give to the boat with which you must cross the river. We say you're crossing to the other side of the river, and the boat is necessary and useful.

But respect doesn't mean that you start bureaucratizing the situation or you transform it into something very formal. Rather this is a matter of the individual's own understand and feeling of the matter of respect. That is to say, one isn't neglectful or inconsiderate. That's what respect means. So similarly one behaves towards the teaching that one possesses as an individual, but also towards whatever teaching another individual may possess, with the same kind of respect and consideration.

Then people who receive and follow teachings together are called brothers and sisters of the vajra. But this too is not

a matter of forming some kind of group or movement. The principle is that these people enter into a certain state of knowledge together. And this too they very often apply together in practice. And then they've together entered into the same lineage of transmission with which they're now linked. And this fact too must be present. They must be aware of it and keep it present and show respect towards these people with whom they share this.

When this principle is understood and kept in one's attention, then between practitioner and practitioner, between disciple and disciple, between master and disciple, there's a relationship of seriousness. If one learns something from a master, how should the individual then consider that master? You should regard the master as someone who cooperates with you and helps you. It's not someone who answers you out of self-interest. But rather it's someone who enters into your own individual dimension to some degree. This is a level of understanding which promotes collaboration.

You must never see the master as some kind of boss or general. Or "I was in a certain situation with that person. Since I was in that situation, now I'm obliged to respect him. It's an obligation." That's not the principle. It's a relationship that exists between master and disciple that begins with transmission and lasts until final realization.

In the Dzogchen teaching when we speak of the damtsig, the samaya, or promises, or vows, we don't speak as in other teachings "Your vow or commitment is to recite such and such a mantra so many times a day", or whatever. Or "You've made a promise. And now you must every day perform such and such a visualization." There are no such promises in Dzogchen.

But one's promise or commitment is explained with four principles. The first, there's nothing. That is, there's no promise. You're not conditioned by the master. You're not conditioned by the teaching. There's nothing. That which we're saying is what we say about our underlying condition when we talk of the essence. The essence is void, empty. There's nothing to hold onto.

The second of these is, but it's there. That's clarity. In the consideration of the four samaya, it's said chalpa (phyal-ba). Chalpa is "anything can be present, whatever."

The third is chigpu. There's one state, one state only. The one state, the only state, means the underlying and only state of the individual himself. And for that individual, that's the center of the very universe. That state is then explained or analyzed as essence, nature, and energy, as the base. And in the teaching one is introduced to knowledge of that base. One is introduced to the fact that one finds oneself in this one and only state, this unique state.

And the last of the four is what's called lhundrub, self-perfectedness. This one and only state, one's underlying condition, is totally self-perfected. It lacks nothing. There's nothing to change. There's nothing to construct. From the very beginning, as it is, is how it's been. How it's been is as it is. And this we call lhundrub.

The presence of these four considerations, these four commitments, is contemplation. And contemplation is transmitted by a master. And through this transmission one

has entered into knowledge. To find oneself in this state is also and automatically to maintain one's promises. So there's no other promise that has to be constructed, or made, or kept.

So it's very easy to understand that the practice is that one has to go into contemplation as much as is possible, and not be distracted. And that's the conclusion of the four chogzhag. And that's how you continue the practice of the Upadesha. Ok, for now that's enough.

[Saturday afternoon, 24-Jul-82]

Today, at this moment, I want to explain what's on page 47. Since there's something there, you have to know how to practice it. All of that which has been put into this book is useful. This is a method of practice. It's derived from the path of transformation as practiced in the Anuyoga, but the principle of it is a Guruyoga.

In the system of the Anuyoga there's a practice called khorwa dungtrug ('khor-ba bdung-sprugs). It involves a concentration on Vajrasattva and the manifestation of the one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities. It's really a fantastic practice, above all ?? for purification. It's a practice somewhat linked to that method. But we utilize this practice in all of the series, in the Dzogchen Semde, Longde, and Upadesha, above all when a person wants to do some practice in which they visualize something. It's very simple and at the same time complete.

There's a way of doing this practice with the single figure of Vajrasattva and it's on page 11. You see there an illustration which shows an image of Vajrasattva, as just Vajrasattva would be. There's also in the Semde teachings of Dzogchen a variation in which the figure of Vajrasattva, instead of being white, is blue. And he's called not Dorjesempa but Sempadorje, that is, Sattvavajra. Nothing changed. The principle is actually exactly the same.

There's a difference however when in the Longde and in the Upadesha, we use Vajrasattva yabyum, that is, in union. Because this is used exactly to carry forward practice with sensation, with pleasurable feeling. If we manifest as a Vajrasattva, we manifest like this one, like just the figure of Vajrasattva alone, or we manifest as Vajrasattva in yabyum union, in sexual union, obviously if you have an awareness of your sensation, the impression that you're experiencing when you do that, those two different visualizations, you have a different experience, a different sensation. So therefore when our method calls for the presence of dewa, of pleasurable sensation, then the concentration that we do of Vajrasattva is in yabyum form.

The figure of Vajrasattva yabyum is identical with the image which is presented in Anuttaratanttra of Vajradhara. The color is white, and you concentrate on yourself. Whereas the figure of Vajrasattva that manifests before you is the color blue. It will be clearer when we explain in detail what's on this page. Like Vajradhara you have the bell and the dorje and the hands are united like this.

At the beginning you practice the AH. Then next to the AH, you proceed to the box next to the AH, not to the one below. The box next to it has the verses of commitment, of

Bodhicitta. When we're doing any practice, there's a motive, a reason, for being aware and present. I commit myself to finding myself in, or living in, the state of what I am.

Then we enter into the visualization. And we see seven successive HUMs, each of which has to be sounded aloud. At the first sound of the HUM, you visualize at the center of the body a white luminous HUM. And this HUM in effect represents your state. We've already know that you sound the HUM simultaneously with mouth and with nostrils. And you always know that you sound it first subtly, then with an enlarged sound, and it narrows to a subtle sound again. While sounding the HUM, you concentrate well on this white luminous HUM at the center of your body.

When we say visualize, there are two ways to visualize: visualization as seen in the framework of the Anuttaratantra in general, and on the other hand, visualization as understood in the Anuyoga. In the Anuttaratantra it's very important that when you visualize to have an almost visual experience as if seeing something. Because visualization must proceed toward concreteness through a slow painstaking detailed development.

And in that system if you don't succeed in visualizing an actual visual image, then you do something like placing an object, in this case, you'd put a written HUM, a drawn HUM, in front of you, fix on it for a long period, fix your gaze on it, and then closing your eyes, try to retain the visual impression. In this way you would train yourself. In this way it's easy to learn to imagine whatever has to be imagined.

Instead, in the system of the Anuyoga, and this practice that we're doing here is in the Anuyoga system, if you can see like that, fine. But even if you can't see the visualization, the most important thing is to feel its presence and to have the awareness that it's there. For example, if I concentrate on a HUM, I may not exactly see a HUM exactly the way it's written, but I've got some strong sense that there's something present there of that kind. That's a much more important contact than any precise visualization. And one is very much helped in doing this by sounding the letter.

So first you sound and simultaneously visualize the white HUM. Then you sound the HUM a second time. And from this HUM expand rays of light in all directions. And these rays of light eliminate all of our dualistic conceptions. They purify anything that could be considered subject, object, the whole dualistic dimension, and ultimately create an entire dimension of light.

Then you sound the third HUM. And in this it's said it's principally is offering, sag (bsags), and jong (sbyong). And this sag and jong is utilized very much in Sutric Buddhism and also in Tantra. For example when we do the ngondro, there's something called the practice of the offering of the mandala. The offering of the mandala is to accumulate good action. And then after that comes the practice of Vajrasattva. And that's to purify all karmic traces. These two are called sag and jong.

Now with this third HUM, we're doing that work. Then we sound this HUM, this third time, and the rays of light expand from the central HUM in all directions, and these rays of

light reach to all of the dimension of the Nirmanakaya and of the Sambhogakaya, that is, to all enlightened beings, all beings who have manifested their enlightenment. And through these rays there manifest infinite offerings to all enlightened beings.

Through such an offering we accumulate merit infinitely greater than what we could through our concept of the mandala. Certainly you don't impose any limitations or confines on this. You go beyond any and all limitations whatsoever. This is the aspect which we call accumulating good actions.

Then we have the fourth HUM. We sound the fourth HUM. Once again the rays of light expand in all directions. And they reach all beings, primarily those of the six lokas. These rays reach and touch all possible karmic visions. And when this expanding light makes that contact, through this contact with the light, there is elimination and purification of all and any karmic traces and ???. So then there manifests as a result of this purification a pure vision of the state of Vajrasattva.

Then you sound the fifth HUM. And while sounding the fifth HUM, all of these rays of light reunite. As the rays of light all reabsorb in you, you yourself become a white luminous Vajrasattva. And you can visualize this Vajrasattva either as alone, singular, or in yabyum union.

Then you sound the sixth HUM. [tap gap]... of you who are Vajrasattva. This white vajra is five-pointed because it symbolizes the five Dhyani Buddhas, the five wisdoms, and so forth. Usually this is called thug dorje (thugs rdo-rje). Thug meaning the state of the mind, that is, it represents the state of the mind of all of the enlightened ones.

Then you sound the last, that is, the seventh HUM. Then at the very center of the white vajra, right at the center, like there's a node which the two forms meet. Inside that node appears a blue HUM. And that blue HUM represents the pure state in manifestation. In the book we have the vajra lying horizontal. But when we visualize it, we visualize it vertical.

At the same moment that sounding the seventh HUM, the blue HUM appears at the center of the node of the white vajra which is at the center of your body as Vajrasattva, at that same moment there appears in front of you a blue Vajrasattva, and that blue Vajrasattva is the same as you who are the white Vajrasattva, that is, either singular or yabyum.

Normally we say of this visualization of two, damtsigpa (dam-tshig-pa) and yeshepa (ye-shes-pa). This principally originates in the system of the Yogatantra. Yeshaypa means the state of wisdom, the state of the enlightened being whom we find before us. And the damtsigpa is we ourselves, I who receive and make a promise. I promise to commit myself to the realization of this wisdom, and I'm now taking, and receiving, the method for accomplishing that realization, which is why I'm doing this visualization.

But in this case the yeshaypa which appears before us represents above all the unification of the state of all the masters and teachers. The concept is not the same as that of Yogatantra. Because in the Yogatantra when you visualize Vajrasattva, that represents the state of Vajrasattva, that

which is to be realized, that which is realized.

Here that can also be the state of Vajrasattva, but above all the principle is recognition that that is the unification of the state of all the masters and teachers. Because if I, an individual, have had a transmission, the transmission I had didn't come direct from Vajrasattva. It came from a master or teacher. But through the master or teacher there's a linkage, so that ultimately there is a connection with the state of Vajrasattva. So it's very important here that I understand that the principle is recognition of the unity of all the masters and teachers, and that image here is that of Vajrasattva.

Now we have sounding OM AH HUM. We have a series of boxes where we sound OM AH HUM five times. Now there's no little notation in these boxes of what's going on, so you'd better listen well because you won't be able to peek at the notes.

As you sound the first OM AH HUM, the three letters manifest in the three centers, forehead, throat, and center of the body or heart, of the blue Vajrasattva who is before you. And as usual, it's a white OM. It's a red AH. It's a blue HUM. This time though you're seeing them manifest in the blue Vajrasattva before you. And these letters represent the three vajras of all of the illuminated, all of the enlightened, beings.

You visualize them. Each one appears in a five-colored transparent sphere or thigle. And the reason that you see them each appear in the thigle, is because this helps us cultivate and deepen our vision in later practices like Longde for example. This is with the first OM AH HUM, the letters appearing in the thigles.

We have to also know how to sound OM AH HUM correctly. The OM shifting to the AH, and the AH changes into the HUM. But you mustn't let this transformation occupy too much space. The OM goes into AH. The AH into HUM. The transformation takes place quickly. And then the HUM is long and you concentrate and go with it.

Now you're sounding for the second time the OM AH HUM. Now when you sound the second OM AH HUM, this white OM, red AH, and blue HUM at the three locations, or three centers, on the blue Vajrasattva acts as a magnet. All of the powers, capacities, abilities of all of the enlightened beings, we say the Tathagatas, all come in the form of rays of light, reabsorbing, called by, are attracted by the magnet of that OM AH HUM on the blue Vajrasattva figure.

And this is because later at the end, when one unifies with that state, one will be unifying with all that, all the capacity and ability and state of all the enlightened beings, the Tathagatas, that have been absorbed into that OM AH and HUM.

Now we've got another three times, the OM AH HUM. The first one is attracting all the Gurus, the second all of the devas, the third all the dakinis. When we do it the first of these three times, we say the Gurus, it means all of the teachers, all of the lineages of teachers, in particular all of those with which you as an individual have had any contact. It's not important whether these are masters and teachers of

Semde, of Longde, of Upadesha, or of Dzogchen, or not of Dzogchen, whatever lineage or tradition of teaching it is.

Nor is it important if these are teachers and masters with whom one has had a direct or an indirect contact. One may have read a book by some teacher, and if that book has contributed to your knowledge, he too is one of your teachers or masters. Considering that someone is Guru means this in general. Now in this practice one doesn't permit oneself to be confined within any kinds of limits. All the teachers are recognized.

Then the next time there is the sound of OM AH HUM. There is the unification of all the devas. But this isn't what we called the divinities or gods in the loka that we purified when we did purification. Because the loka where we find divinities or gods refers to worldly divinities. This means a vision of divinities, an existence of divinities, which arises from karmic causes.

What we mean here by divinities, or devas, is individuals who have become totally realized and have manifested their realization. And their manifestation of realization is at the level we call Sambhogakaya. Just as the types of being which manifested in transformation, they were followed, their example was taken, these beings have completed the path of transformation, and now have realized themselves as resembling, as being, those yidams, those herukas.

And they may have manifested in different ways. And above all depending on our capacities to perceive them, they can manifest as peaceful, as wrathful, or as joyous divinities. In general when we say heruka, we consider them either as wrathful or as joyous manifestations. All of these we in general in Tibetan call yidam, that is, ways in which the state of the individual itself manifests in this condition of transformation. And infinities of these manifestations, endless numbers of them, with all of their powers, capacities, all their siddhis, all of their realization are absorbed, carried by the light rays, into that OM AH HUM.

Then the last of these OM AH HUMs represents the unification of all of the dakinis. Dakini is a very generic term. Here too we speak of worldly dakinis and dakinis beyond that, non-worldly dakinis. That is to say, the latter refers to dakinis who are manifestations at the Sambhogakaya level, just like we have here in the book the manifestation of Sihamukha. And there are other types like Vajrayogini, like Dorjepamo. These are Sambhogakaya manifestations. Their way of manifesting is as dakinis.

And then there are many dakinis whose condition of manifestation, whose situation of manifestation, is more worldly, more let us say normal, or are linked with different actions and activities. When we put to work a mandala, the form of a mandala, if we understand this or divide this into activities, we speak of four worldly activities, and then we speak of lesser activities, and then we speak of a supreme activity which is realization. When we speak of an action or activity, this means something performed, and that works through energy. And the manifestations of the dakinis are always through energy.

So when we speak of the dakinis, the dakinis are

considered something which dominate these actions or activities. There are the dakinis who are characteristic of each of the four actions. They say, karma dakini, ratna dakini, padma dakini. It means a dakini dominates certain specific activities. Of dakinis there are many different explanations. In any case dakini implies a being which manifests, or dominates, or masters, certain energies. It can be a manifestation at the Sambhogakaya level. It can manifest as an important guardian, like Ekajati. There are also dakinis who have manifested as beings of the eight classes, like the mamu.

One of the guardians that we utilize is called Tshe-ring-ma, and she manifests as one of the class of mamu. There are also dakinis who are found who present themselves as human beings. And there are dakinis who present themselves as what is called shasha ?? khandro, that is, as evil spirits. There are many types of dakinis. So the term dakini is very generic indeed.

For example in the Dzogchen teaching it is said that when Garab Dorje first taught, for many many years his teaching contact was with the dakinis. It presumably means that when he first taught, he didn't teach human beings, but had contact with the dakinis. We just can't say what type of dakinis they were. There may have been some human ones among them too. Again when we talk of the life of Padmasambhava, above all the life history of Padmasambhava in which it is stated that he was miraculously born, it is said that he was for four years in the lake of Dhanakosa teaching the dakinis.

So it is said that the dakinis are the patrons of the teaching, above all of the Dzogchen teaching. Why? Because initially these teachings first of all had communication, or were communicated with, them. Not only at the beginning, but also at the end. Those who govern, or are patrons of the teaching, are the dakinis.

Also an individual like Padmasambhava or like Vimalamitra who accomplished the body of light, we don't have very much contact normally with these individuals, because we're fettered within extreme material limitations. But they have continuous contact with the dakinis, with hundreds and with thousands of dakinis.

For which reason here in the seven verses of Padmasambhava, page 27, this line KHOR DU KHANDRO MANGPO KHOR ('khor-du mkha'-'gro mang-pos-bskor), which means he's always surrounded by a throng of dakinis. It's not because Padmasambhava particularly chose to hang out with dakinis, or because he has some kind of grudge against human beings. But the condition, the situation, of the dakinis is a specific one, a different one. So they have always this possibility of manifesting through energy. And for this reason they are always present. And this is what dakini means without imposing any specific borders and limits on it.

So with this fifth OM AH HUM, all of the dakinis unify in these same three vajras, in the same three letters, that you find in the blue Vajrasattva. But the reason they have to all unify there is not because Vajrasattva is weak and needs their reinforcement. It's because we're so limited that we have to unite it all there.

We always say, as you know, we do a Guruyoga with something representative of the unification. So we mustn't exclude or segregate anything out because of limitations of school, or of tradition, of sect, or whatever. And this is the principle we're working on here.

When we have finished sounding the OM AH HUM, now the process continues with all of the light, all of these forces uniting in that kind of magnet of the three vajras. With that awareness you perform this mudra. The mudra that you already know with the hands closed with the thumb within, one hand upon the other, and bring them toward the chest, the center of the body. And with that mudra, with that awareness, you sound the hundred syllable mantra. [recitation].

This hundred syllable mantra, sometimes you see it a little differently. To some degree you might find that there are more ancient and more modern traditions in regard to it. In some you'll find at the very end of the mantra also HUM and a PHAT. In any case it's called one hundred syllables, and it's considered that there are a hundred syllables. And this hundred syllables represents the manifestation of the hundred pacific and ferocious deities. So in fact when the practice of the khorwa dungtrug is done, there's a visualization of those hundred deities.

Now here in the mantra there's at the beginning an OM representing the body. Then in the middle there's CITTAM SHREYAM KURU and there's a HUM. And at the very end, there's the AH. Usually we say OM AH HUM. Here the order is OM HUM AH. For this reason many people also when we do the reciting the vajra and breathing, inhale with the OM, they hold the HUM, and exhale with the AH. They coordinate it with how it is here. But many people are more habituated to the guideline OM AH HUM. In fact it doesn't anything which one you do. All that you need to do is understand why people do this, and why it exists.

While you're reciting the mantra and you have that mudra, the unification continues, and beings are all absorbed in that three vajras. Now after that you see that once again we begin to sound the OM AH HUM. That's the moment in which you begin to take initiation. From the OM AH and HUM of the blue Vajrasattva before you descend three rays of light, and the three rays of light, respectively white, red, and blue, arrive at your three corresponding locations. And immediately there appear at your three locations thigle, five-colored transparent spheres, with the letters OM AH and HUM.

Now we have a completed linkage effected by the three bright luminous rays between the three locations of the blue Vajrasattva and the three locations in you who are also Vajrasattva. With this awareness, conscious of this process taking place, you begin again and do the one hundred syllable mantra. And you can perfectly utilize the mudra again. If you're very lazy and don't want to do the mudra, that's OK too.

Normally when we do this specific practice, this second time that we do the hundred syllable mantra, we do it three times. In the tradition of practice that's done in the Semde, the first hundred syllable is done 3 times, and they do the second time, the second turn for the hundred syllable mantra,

they do it 7 times. But if you do things in such a complicated, formal, boxed-in way, they get complicated. But if you're doing a session of practice, you could do the second turn, the hundred syllable mantra 3 times. That really isn't so complicated.

Most important is that while doing it you continuously have the sense, the impression, or awareness, that the rays of light are descending and entering you. Now as you've also heard in the evenings, we sing this Vajrasattva mantra, this hundred syllable mantra.

Now in general all of the schools, all of the traditions, use the hundred syllable mantra. When they do this, the consideration is they have to recite it many many many many times. They recite it very fast as if they were talking Chinese. But here there's no premium on how fast you can say it. Because what's of primary importance is the visualization. You'll remember that in the practice of Dzogchen, in the teaching of Dzogchen, mantra is performed with a knowledge, with a visualization, and with the knowledge of linking these in contemplation. In Dzogchen whatever visualization practice you may do, if governed by contemplation, is considered very important indeed.

If we've practiced the song of the vajra sufficiently, then when we sound it, we can govern it with contemplation. There's a series of practices in Dzogchen, rather in the style of Anuyoga, practices of Vajrasattva that derive from a gongter, a mind terma, of the master Adzom Drugpa. And of that ... [tape gap] ... there's a practice there of Adzomgar, At Adzomgar the practice of that is carried on for twenty days. And when this practiced is performed, they continue a kind of chain of mantra. And during that chain of mantra, they sing this in the fashion that we do.

Someone asked me "From what tradition comes this way of singing? Where does this derive?" I know to say only this. In general songs, the tunes, comes from the nyams of the masters. If one has to go back to the source, one finds that this specifies that it derives from the nyam of some particular person.

For example, in the Sakyapa school there's a certain rite of Mahakala with fantastic chanting. It is said that a master who was at Kalu tradzong ??, which is a very important Sakyapa monastery, that the master there had a vision of a manifestation of Mahakala and of the whole dimension of the 72 Mahakalas. This ferociously wrathful dimension, was chanting out in that fashion. And he learned from that.

And there are some chants of Mindroling, and it's said that Terchen Jigmay Dorje had half a nyam, half a dream. And in this way arrived a vision of the pure dimension of Padmasambhava. There were then thousands of dakinis and also realized ones. And they all did the Ganapuja and sang in that fashion. And so when he came back, when he woke up, presumably he didn't have a tape recorder, but he tried to remember it the best he could. And he taught these chants. These are examples of how these melodies or chants arise. And it's not so easy to find justification or an account of each and every one of them.

Then at the very end, after we do the second turn of the

hundred syllable mantra, we have again OM AH HUM. At that point all of the manifestation, all of the light, all that which has been absorbed together, now reabsorbs or enters into our three vajras. With the OM AH HUM that blue Vajrasattva is part of what disappears into your OM AH and HUM. The Vajrasattva into which everything has gone, now disappears into your OM AH and HUM. When we finish the Guruyoga there's always a unification into our three states.

Now sounding the HUM, the Vajrasattva who you are absorbs into the white vajra at the center of your body. Now you sound the HUM a second time, and the white vajra itself disappears into the blue HUM at its center. Then you sound a last HUM, then the blue HUM itself disappears from its base, from its bottom tip, disappears, fades away, up to the very top of the blue HUM where there's a thigle.

This way of practicing takes us to what we call the final dzogrim. Because if we visualize the HUM, and it disappears from the bottom up to the topmost tip and is gone, what's left? Nothing. There's nothing there now. So at the very end we are carried into, as we say, a state of void. In the Yogatantra for example, when we speak of the Yogatantra, at the end we go into the state of void. We don't say that that's a state of Mahamudra.

But knowing how to do contemplation and knowing about the state of rigpa, then you go from that moment of void into contemplation, and continue in a state of contemplation. Because the state of contemplation is beyond any form like that of the letter HUM. That letter HUM which has just disappeared was the final point, the last remains, of this whole visualization. And so you continue as you can.

When the thought comes "Well that's enough. Now I'll rest", at that point you chant the brief verse which is near the end of our normal tun, our evening practice, which goes nang drag rig sum, and so forth. These verses nang drag rig sum lha ngag choki ku (snang grags rig gsum lha sngags chos kyi sku), and so forth, describe the way of behaving, the attitude that's taken, by a practitioner of visualization, after visualization in the Anuyoga. This is found on page 38 just above the yak family that you see depicted there.

Nang drag rig means vision, and sound, and a state of rigpa. And these three are equivalent to the vision of all the devas and dakinis, the illuminated, the herukas, whatever you've seen, the sound of the mantra, and the state of Dharmakaya, which corresponds to the rigpa.

Then the second line, you have ku dang yeshe rolpar chamsulay (sku dang ye shes rol par 'byams su klas), sku here is equivalent to the dimension, that is, the yeshe means the wisdom, that which manifests in its dimension, chamsulay means the infinities of manifestation which came about through rolpa energy. The third line, zab sang dzogpa chenpoy naljordu (zab gsang rdzogs pa chen po'i rnal 'byor du), in knowledge of the profound state of Dzogchen.

The last line, yermay thugki thigler rocig shog (dbyer med thugs kyi thig ler ro gcig shog), in this state we continue without making a distinction, without saying "This is now impure vision, and it can't fit anymore in the pure vision" or "That was pure vision, and that can't fit now as we

proceed".

Instead we continue in one flavor. So that it's as if the dimension of visualization were continuing through our knowledge of the state of Dzogchen. Thugki thigle. Thugki means the mind, and the thigle means the state, the ultimate state, of Dzogchen. So we finish the practice in this way. Now we've finished that explanation. Maybe tomorrow we can practice it, if by tomorrow one has understood how to do it.

[Sunday morning, 25-Jul-82]

Today I'll give an exposition of something quite important. Everything's important. It's always important. But today I give an explanation of something that's important because you don't know it. And you don't even know how to ask about it.

In the Teaching of the Upadesha, there's a method which is commonly known as dranpa gyunchodgi dampa (dran-pa rgyun-gcod-gyi dam-pa). Dranpa means like teaching, or like a particular method. Dranpa means also memory, and also means those things which are remembered, memories. And sometimes dranpa is used for awareness, sense of self-remembering. This word dranpa in Tibetan is very vague.

In this particular case, dranpa has two precise significances. On the one hand dranpa refers to how thoughts arise. And on the other hand, dranpa refers to all of the memory imprints, all of the recollections we have of past traces and imprints. But it doesn't mean our memory. As a practical matter, it means on the one hand thoughts, and on the other our bagchag (bag-chags), or traces or imprints of the past. Gyun means that these continue, their continuity.

And chod, just as in the practice of the chod, means to cut through that, or block it. So it means to block or cut through the continuity of our thought, the continuing of our thought, and in particular, of our thoughts which are linked to, or derived from, past traces, our bagchag or past imprints. This is what's given in general as the title of this method. And quite surely, none of you know of this.

And the method that's used, it's practically applied, has another name. It's called zernga (gzer-lnga, 'dzer-lnga ??). Zer means specific principal points. At times, in spoken Tibetan, in idiomatic Tibetan, zerma (gzer-ma) means nails. Because nails are placed at specified points. Or, sometimes, zerma refers to the knots in wood. Because the knot characterizes a specific location in the wood, and in fact, a specific concentration of energy in the wood. This is what zer means grammatically, lexicographically. And here, zer means principal points. And nga (lnga) means five. So here there are five specified principal points to this practice.

This is a practice which is not in fact very widespread, but it's a very important practice in the Upadesha teachings of Dzogchen. Why is it important? I'll explain why it's important. We have an idea of the Dzogchen teachings, and of the Upadesha teachings, are trecho (khregs-chod) and thogay (thod-rgal). And trecho is in order to find a state of totality, where subject and object are not experienced as two, where there's no distinction. We've spoken of moving from the

principal state, knowledge of that state, rigpa, to its encompassing both naypa (gnas-pa) and gyuwa ('gyu-ba). Contained within that is knowledge of our base, our essence, nature and energy, and in particular, knowledge of the way in which energy functions.

Therefore to find oneself in the state of contemplation means to find oneself in a living state of knowledge. And we've said, to develop this, to make it totally real and concrete, there exists the practice of thogay. Why then, is thogay so important to develop? To bring about this realization, this reality, in life, to make it concrete, one has to find a genuine reintegration with the vision, with all that presents itself.

For example, you put a finger in the fire. You're burned. Because for us, the fire is something materially, concretely, other. And the finger is something material and concrete. And fire's way of functioning, way of working, is that it burns. So logically a finger in the fire produces this result, burning. It's not sufficient that we know that in an underlying way they both have the same nature. Our knowledge isn't real, and doesn't correspond to the reality. Why doesn't our knowledge correspond? Because we remain very strongly rooted in this dualistic way of being. Subject and object holds for us, because all of our traces have solidified, just as we said water solidifies into ice.

So it's by no means easy for us to reintegrate, and find ourselves at one with, in the same condition as, what is. So first one enters into a knowledge. Owing to this knowledge, and through this knowledge, one is not conditioned by things. One finds oneself, as we've said, in the condition, in the situation, of the mirror, not of the reflections. But if one genuinely possesses and lives such knowledge, then one can proceed to apply it concretely. That is, one possesses real and true knowledge, lived knowledge, of the trecho. Then comes a very particular and special method which is thogay.

There's an explanation of the dhatu, or space, the ying (dbyings), internal and external. And our inner ying appears as if it were external ying. There's a relationship in which it emerges as if it were the external case. In such a case, it's because one possesses total knowledge, genuine knowledge, of what this internal ying is through complete mastery of the trecho. That which still remains, that which is present, is one's material body. Then there remains for the material body to reintegrate with the internal ying which now presents itself as if it were external. And this is the method and principle of the thogay teaching. How one does that is explained in practice.

But before one reintegrates with that inner ying, apparently outer, one must have the capacity to do so. It's not sufficient that one has a bit of vision. One must have certain capacities for dominion over one's material condition. And our material condition means principally the elements of which we are composed. The elements of our materiality, solidified, densened, have become flesh and blood and the like. When one is capable of fully integrating material body into the ying, the inner ying which is now apparently outer, that we call the Body of Light.

But how is that to actually come about? If you stop and actually look at our material body, it's a rather complicated affair. So it's not enough to say that one has fantastic apparitions and visions. You have to proceed concretely and with method. And the masters who practiced this worked with many different means.

For example, the master of my master, Nyagla Padma Dudul who achieved -- who was the Body of Light, practiced the chudlen (bcud-len) in Dharmakaya style, that is to say, ate nothing at all for three years. He practiced the chudlen in the Sambhogakaya style, that is, eating only bits of pulverized mineral and stone for more than seven years. And this is because this is part of the method of work. It certainly wasn't in order to lose weight and get thinner and thinner until he disappeared. One can fast completely and not disappear.

And now we have this practice, the one I wanted to explain, which is the zernga. And in particular it's for absorbing or condensing materiality into its substance. So you can see that it's an important practice. And if one is genuinely interested in the thogay, then one must have pretty much mastery of these things. If not, thogay doesn't function. It's just a knowledge in the abstract, and remains there.

We know that first of all there are five elements. The five elements: we speak first of all of one's breathing, that is, air. And flesh, bone, substance, is represented as the element earth. All the liquids and fluids of the body are represented as water. The heat that the body possesses is represented as fire. And also in medicine the same principle is applied and these things are understood in the same way. So the five zer, the five points, is structured in this way because there are five elements to conquer, or overcome.

The first of the five, the practice, begins with the air. Since the air is, breathing is, at the base, it's what you begin with. And the body is based on one's continuing breathing. Now the zernga all imply a real job done with the mind, that is, visualization and concentration. And at the end these bring one to the state of contemplation.

First of all, one develops the presence, the awareness, the impression, of being in a place that's all sand. It's said that it's a sand sparkling like jewels. One is in a state like the state of shinay, a state of pleasant calm of mind. And one can be in a place that's actually made up of jewels which is in some sense pleasing, tranquil, comforting. And the wind begins to rise. And the wind intensifies everywhere. And then this wind become, this air becomes, ever more violent. And it reaches the extremity of what's called "How the elements will be at the end of the kalpa". That is, it's considered that every element has the capacity for total destructiveness, for ending the world, and this is the intensity that the wind arrives at.

When we began the tun, everything was so peaceful and tranquil. And slowly, slowly, a wind became a disturbance. And now the wind tears away everything, everything which is present. At a certain point, it tears me away too. It's said, the illustration is given in regard to the bardo of

existence, like a feather that's carried by a strong wind, has no program as to where it will go, no itinerary. The wind carries it where it blows. This in the bardo is given as an illustration of what is called the Wind of Karma. Here, we're not talking about karma.

Here, rather the visualization is of the wind as wind, and it beats and blows everywhere until ultimately it carries you yourself like a feather in the wind wherever it blows. But when you're visualizing such a thing, there's always your sensory awareness of the nyam. And somebody who's very nervous may not want to continue. Or there are people who when they close their eyes, and begin such a scene, have kind of jolt of fear. That's a kind of illness. For people like that, it's not so easy to begin this. So, you have to do it gradually.

But if a person has no problem, of that kind, they can go all the way with it. Even if many nyams arise, no harm. Nyams are a way in which practice appears, or presents itself. But then we go still further, because as we said, this wind is likened to the wind which will end the kalpa. The wind of the end of the kalpa, a sort of world-ending wind, is capable also of destroying my body. It won't leave a single atom of my body intact.

So here I have this full sense and awareness of total destruction of my body by the wind. But not only destruction of my body, destruction of all of the imprints and traces which I bear, and of all my thought. So that nothing whatsoever remains. Everything is totally nullified. But the primordial state cannot be destroyed. Nothing can destroy it. There's nothing there to destroy. And this exists beyond the reach or the condition of this wind.

When I've reached the very end of this elimination, the ultimate, when not an atom remains, there is nothing at all. There appears the green letter AH. It's in a sense a fixation, or perhaps more that one is aware of, one has the presence of, this green letter AH. And one continues with the presence, with the awareness, of this green letter AH, and brings oneself into contemplation.

This is called lungjong (rlung-sbyong). Lung means the element air and jong means either to train oneself, or to purify. This is a way of working to bring the elements to their substance, bring them to their origin. We speak and think of it as destruction, but destruction means to bring the element back to its underlying nature. This is the first of the five zernga.

After that is the practice of fire. Because the body also possesses its characteristic or condition of fire, of heat. We begin, again, the visualization, with something very pleasant. Let's say a lovely forest full of flowers. A splendid view. There are wonderful trees. Let's say I'm under a tree, doing contemplation in utmost tranquillity. The air is good and there's a beautiful scent of the forest. And it's a pleasure to stay there awhile.

And then the flames start up. But they don't come immediately. It's the forest which is taking fire first. And the forest is burning for quite awhile, and I'm still sitting tranquilly in contemplation. But the fire is becoming more

and more violent. To the left, to the right, on all sides the fire is blazing, and now the whole mountain is blazing. And I begin to feel the heat of it, even though the flames haven't reached me. Now the flame is getting closer at a certain moment. I'm still in contemplation, and making no preparation to flee. Now the flame is really close, and it's burning the very tree I'm sitting under.

And now the fire begins to burn me. But at this point, the fire isn't just burning the tree or burning my clothes, or burning my body. It has become the absolute fire of the end of the kalpa, that is, a fire capable of burning any and everything, a world-ending fire. And so it burns totally my body. There's not even ash. So this fire possesses the fire to burn away all of the karmic traces, all of the past imprints I bear, and all of my thoughts. Whatever materiality that exists, down to the smallest particles, enter into the substance of this fire, and are done away with. There's the elimination of all and of everything, through fire. And of course, here again, if you're practicing this, and have this visualization, there's the sensation, the impression, the experience of the nyams.

At the very end, when everything is gone, the experience arrives at the red double letter AH. That is to say, you visualize two red AHs. This is perhaps corresponding to the fact that we have now purified the second element. So we've already done air, so now we've got fire, so now there are two. But when we do the fire visualization, we see the two AHs, both red, not one green, one red, one before the other. And this is the method, and this is how that's done.

There might be a precise reason for this double red AH, since this practice is something that many, many have done in the course of time. And there's a whole history of experience to insist that it be done in this way. Then one experiences the presence of these red AHs in this way, and then passes into contemplation. And thus one has finished the training or purification with mejong (me-sbyong), that is, with the element of fire.

Then the third is with water. We might relax a bit before we go on to the third one. And then, once again, we visualize being in a pleasant situation. And here the practitioner visualizes being in what is called a manjong (sman-ljongs), that is, a place - man means full of medicinal plants, herbs and flowers. It's as if you were in a botanical garden, or a special herbal garden or orchard or herbal grove. It's a very beautiful place, a very healthy place. There's absolutely nothing to disturb you there. You're totally tranquil. Everything's pleasing. You continue for awhile in that state. You're in contemplation.

And the water begins to seep in. It's as if a pipe had broken. You don't say "There is a pipe broken." But the water begins to rise around you. So slowly the whole space fills with water. And the water begins to be moving water, and becomes agitated, rapidly moving water. And at a certain point we find ourselves in the middle of this flood of agitated water. And then this moving, churning water begins to ruin and destroy all that which is around us. And at a certain moment I too am being flung about by the churning

water.

And this water begins to acquire a maximum destructive power until ultimately this water becomes such an intensity of destruction that it can destroy not only everything external, but my body, my traces of bagchag, that is, my karmic imprints, and all of my thoughts. Until the water itself, totally destroying, itself enters into its ultimate element. Which doesn't mean that there's a big lake or sea left.

But rather that all of these elements, and here, the water, ultimately self-destroy, condense into their final nature, which is nothingness, void. And at this moment our state appears as three red AHs. Oh, pardon, white. The water here is white, and it's three AHs. The fire is red, two AHs. The wind or air was green, one AH. And, once again, one passes into contemplation.

Obviously you don't do this just once. You can do this again and again. And also it very much depends on what the needs of the given individual are, which element you feel the most. In the practice of the Longde, when that was explained and taught, there's an exposition of all the elements and what they mean, and how one has to confront them. To know how to deal and work with your situation of the elements is very, very important. And this practice corresponds perfectly well, it matches, the explanation given in the Longde.

Now we can proceed to the practice of earth. The one we just did is called chujong (chu-sbyong). Chu means water. Jong again means to train or to purify.

With the element earth, once again you begin in a pleasant place. Let's say you're on a beautiful mountain. It could be Everest and you're breathing well. You can breathe very, very well in the good air there. And you have all around you the panorama of the high mountains. You're comfortable. It's not as if you're sitting on a pointed rock and almost falling or out of -- no, no, you're comfortably located. You have no problems. You're perfectly tranquil and at peace. And you remain a bit in that state, in contemplation.

And you begin at a certain point to feel a little movement. It almost seems like an earthquake. And now that begins to intensify. Now it's becoming serious. And one sees to the right, to the left, all around one, mountains and rocks begin to topple. And now at a certain point, it becomes violent and a massive destruction. As it proceeds towards utter destruction, it becomes extremely violent. Until at the end, everything has been destroyed by this movement, including one's body, the ultimate atoms of one's body, the karmic traces, one's thoughts.

But you mustn't think of it as a normal earthquake. The house fell over and I was crushed in that, and there's my body lying under the rubble. Here, we're talking about a shaking and breaking which becomes the self-destruction of the element earth. And here again, the element, as in each case, finishes in its ultimate condition. Until that point, utter reduction, visualization continues clearly. At this point, when the visualization ends, there begin to appear four yellow AHs. And this is the true condition of the nature of the earth which is appearing.

With each of these practices, we also sound the AH. We accompany this with the sounding of the AH, to give more vibration, more intensity to the practice. But that's not indispensable. If you're practicing somewhere where it's best not to make noise, you can perfectly well do it in silence. Because there exists both the tradition of practicing this sounding, and also another not sounding.

And then we have the last zer, which is what we call the zer of the element space. Because space is that out of which comes all the elements. And also when one says the condition of the individual -- that is, that which gives rise to mind, to thought -- this too, emerges from the condition, space. We speak of mind resting in, or on, space.

So space is the fundamental basis of the elements and this, too, must be included in this practice. When we say space, we have an idea, more or less, of what's meant. At least we have an idea of that space which is the openness of sky. When we look -- when the sky is limpid and pure, we look into it, and we see the limpid blue of space.

With this idea, when we begin the contemplation, I'm located in space, tranquil. I'm not falling in any direction. Because if everything is space, there's no falling in it. While I'm in space, I see all of our material vision, all that which presents itself in every way, melting or dissolving. And it all melts away into, or dissolves into, the color of space, which is blue. First we do this visualization, train a bit this sense.

Then, breathing in, inhaling, it's as if I've breathed in all of this blue space. Then, I too, acquire as if it were my own dimension, this blueness. I too become blue. And into that blueness I too dissolve. All my materiality dissolves or melts away. My own body becomes the same as space. It's as if I and space, space and I, no longer are two, no longer are dual. I've entered into the dimension space. Space has entered into my dimension.

With this presence, with this awareness, there appear five blue AHs. And we stay a bit with the five blue AHs. We train a bit this presence of the five blue AHs. And then, these five blue AHs, one enters into the next. The next enters into the one after. The one after enters into the one that succeeds it, and in the end there's only one blue AH. You don't visualize these AHs before you "I'm visualizing the AHs". The AHs are you. There is nothing there but the AHs. And this is important, that you feel you are the AHs. The AHs are you.

Then when you have this sense of being the AH, you have trained yourself in that, you fix on the AH. You concentrate on this remaining blue AH. Because now all of the elements have passed into the condition of this blue AH. Now, you slowly train yourself in seeing this blue AH expand and become very large. It becomes as big as the house you're in. It becomes bigger than the mountain. It becomes bigger than this planet. It becomes bigger than the universe. And you let it become utterly big, every more enormous, beyond any limitation whatsoever. Then you train in having it become smaller. it becomes tiny, like a green pea. You can bring it down, still more subtle, to the size of an atom. And then you let it grow

again. You train very much in in this enormous expansion and this infinite reduction.

Then with this AH, whether it be big, little, or medium-sized -- you remember that in the practice of sound we have a HUM which travels. And now this AH can travel. You train yourself very much in the AH travelling, in the AH expanding and contracting, and so forth. This is called training the five elements for the eventual return to their substance.

When one has become rather familiar with, and achieved results in this practice, it's said at the end there's the method of chungwa ser-sa jel ('byung-ba ??). Chungwa means elements. ser-sa means to consume or be consumed. jel means to take or to pass into. At this point, one concentrates on this blue AH, with which one has trained, this blue AH that's remained. From the very centre of the blue AH, there emerges on top of it a white AH. There emerges a yellow AH beneath it. Beneath the yellow AH, which is beneath the blue AH, there's a green AH. Above the white AH, there's a red AH.

If we count down from the top, there's a red AH, a white AH, a blue AH, a yellow AH, and beneath that a green AH. You've understood. You move up and down. If you ask me why it's structured like that, I don't know how to explain it to you. But probably this is related to the appearance of the thigle. I know how to do this practice, but I don't yet know how to explain it very well.

One visualizes this appearance, this five-fold multi-colored AH. And then again, you unify these or absorb these into the central AH. You do a bit of training in that. But this work with these five AHs is a way of taking us towards the essence of the elements. But it works only when one has already trained oneself in the five zer. If you just do this last one, it may not work very well.

So, also for a practice like thogay, you have to have prepared yourself with all these things. Otherwise, it just remains sort of theoretical. You don't get the practical results that are necessary. This is called the zernga or dranpa gyunchodgi dampä. You didn't know how to ask for it, but now you know how to do it. It's a very important method. And we've finished for now.

[Sunday afternoon, 25-Jul-82]

Someone asked me to explain something about the phowa, and I' like to explain a bit about that now. Normally, phowa is translated as "transfer". But in Tibetan, there are two types of transfer which have different names. One is called phowa and one is called changjug ??. Both are translated as "transfer". Now what we're talking about is the phowa.

Phowa implies transferring something into something else. But in this regard, there are also normally three major considerations. There is rabtu choku phowa (rab-tu chos-sku 'pho-ba) which is the supreme transfer of the Dharmakaya. There is dring longku phowa (bring longs-sku 'pho-ba). Dring means medium and this means the Sambhogakaya. Then there's the thama tulku phowa (tha-ma sprul-sku 'pho-ba), and thama means the last. This means transfer to the Nirmanakaya level.

That doesn't mean that the Dharmakaya is superior, the Sambhogakaya medium quality and the Nirmanakaya somehow inferior. It's not the implication. Rather, these names stand for the three bodies and their characteristic methods. And that's what's being distinguished here.

This morning I referred to the practice of the chudlen (bcud-len), the practice which permits one to not eat and yet survive perfectly well for great lengths of time. Here too, in the chudlen, we speak of a Dharmakaya style, a Sambhogakaya style and a Nirmanakaya style, that is, three characteristic ways of doing the practice.

Now, when we say the phowa in the Dharmakaya style, that means the supreme phowa, the most important phowa form. That means there's nothing to transfer. That means that one finds oneself in the state of contemplation. When at night, we do the practice of the natural light, this is preparation for finding oneself always in the state of contemplation. And if one wants to, that itself can be considered as a kind of transfer. So the true transfer in the Dharmakaya style would be that at the moment of transfer, it might be at the moment of dying, one is in the state of contemplation.

When we live in the dualistic situation, we apply, we put into action, everything that comes to mind. And so we're constantly applying, that is, putting into action, our attachments. From this condition, we transfer into the state of contemplation. So the supreme transfer is exactly that. So this is what we call the supreme or Dharmakaya style of transfer. That is, there's nothing to be transferred. There's no way in which it's transferred, or place to which it's transferred. There's no one doing the transferring.

Our principle, when we speak of Dzogchen, is that of self-liberation. When we speak of self-liberation, also, there is no where that the liberation has to take place. There's nothing that has to be liberated. There's no one who has to do a liberation. This has to be understood as equally the case for transfer, and the most important and supreme transfer is just that.

Then, we speak of the middle level of transfer, the medium level of transfer, in the Sambhogakaya style. This is for an individual that has had, let us say, initiation on the path of transformation. And this transformation is something that the person has tried to apply and put into action in life

as much as possible. To realize this, to make it real, he has also utilized mantra, most likely. And in the moment when it becomes necessary to transfer, then he tries to transfer into that transformation.

Let's say I'm a practitioner of Vajrayogini. It means that in life, I've very often visualized and performed this transformation. And every night when I've gone to sleep, I've gone to sleep with the awareness or presence of this transformation. This habit serves me in good stead in the moment of dying. In the moment of death, I seek to, once again, transform, manifest as, become, this Vajrayogini. This is what we call the medium level of capacity. That is, in the moment of need, the moment of dying, I take this practice of transformation which I have been doing, and try to apply it.

But this implies a person who has a good deal of experience. It's rather the case that in the moment of dying, you may find you've got quite a bit to deal with. It's not so easy to stop everything and visualize Vajrayogini. If you can do it, it means you're very familiar with the practice.

So that when we come to people with minor capacity, we have the last type of transfer, what's called the Nirmanakaya style. What's usually spoken of as phowa, is this. It's called phowa dushay sumden ('pho-ba 'du-shes gsum-??). It's phowa with three considerations or three intentions. The three are: where you transfer to, what's being transferred, and how you transfer.

The first thing you have to do is visualize where you're going, or transferring to. If for example, you have a bit of experience with something like the Guruyoga, then in that moment, when you're going to transfer out of the body, you visualize that Guruyoga, that form or image of Guruyoga, with which you have experience, that is the easiest for you.

If you've done a lot of visualization of, let's say, Vajrasattva. Or if you have absolutely no idea, no experience, you do something like Amitabha. Because Amitabha is spoken of very much in regard to his Nirmanakaya manifestation. And this dimension is spoken of as Dewachen (bde-ba chen), the paradise of Amitabha. And there's an explanation given, it's called longku zhing (longs-sku zhing). That's the pure dimension of the Sambhogakaya. And there's another, called tulku zhing (sprul-sku zhing) which is considered the pure dimension of the Nirmanakaya. And they're a little different. There are many people who confuse the two very often.

In the Dzogchen teaching, we do sometimes the rigpay tsalwang. We give a kind of introduction to the pure dimension of the five Dhyani Buddhas. In this case, in each of the four directions, there are four Dhyani Buddhas, each with its own dimension. For example, to the west, is found Amitabha. And an explanation is given of the pure dimension of Amitabha. Then there's another explanation given, what we normally speak of as Dewachen. It's called the paradise of Amitabha.

And many people think that these two, the pure dimension and that paradise, are the same. Certainly at bottom, in some sense, they are the same. But the way they manifest is not equivalent. Because when we say Nirmanakaya, we mean a

manifestation that's almost material and tangible, whereas something of the Sambhogakaya is a pure dimension. And at times, this world of ours is defined or described as the Nirmanakaya dimension of Buddha Shakyamuni. It means that it's all here - people, cows, the whole bag. It's not a dimension of the Sambhogakaya.

Similarly, when we speak of Dewachen, the paradise of Amitabha, it's said that there are birds which sing, and the sound is very sweet. And in the Sutra, there is a discussion or argument about this. If there's a pure dimension, a pure vision like that, how can there be birds singing, that is, animals? And there's another response that they add, a couple of words that change it from "birds" to "birds of manifestation". In short, there's abundant confusion between the Nirmanakaya and Sambhogakaya dimensions. And the reason here, to be very clear, that they generally visualize Amitabha is because it's considered that you can be reborn in this Nirmanakaya, therefore, substantial dimension or paradise of Amitabha.

In any case, you're doing a phowa. You visualize something in front of, and above you. The best thing to visualize is that which you have most experience with. It's not obligatory that it be Amitabha or some specific figure. That's where you transfer to. Let's take the example that you have to shoot. You have to shoot at some kind of target. There's got to be something you're aiming at. So, the first consideration is where you transfer to.

The second consideration is what gets transferred. We're doing this transfer out of the body. If I am still living in a dualistic situation, I have to come out of my material body at this moment of death. And in any case, since you're dying, even if you want to hang onto your body, you're coming out. So that's what gets transferred. When you die, you're obliged to leave. You're evicted. So, the important thing is, while you're still not yet dead, to prepare an easy exit. So that's what we mean by what gets transferred - your consciousness.

But we have to visualize this consciousness. We have to see it as something. Since we're habituated in our practice to using something like the letter AH or the letter HUM, there are many, many methods of practice that visualize our consciousness as the white letter AH. And there are many practices in Tantrism which visualize our conscious as the letter HRI in red. The reason they visualize HRI is because where they're going is to Amitabha. And many do this transfer with the visualization of the letter HUM, a blue HUM. And then there are other letters in the red book. When we do the chod, there's OM HUM TRAM HRI AH.

Anyone of the letters can be used. But it depends a bit on what you visualize as your destination, where you're going. When you visualize some particular Sambhogakaya manifestation or a heruka, normally this belongs to the domain of one of the five Dhyani Buddhas. So you visualize the appropriate letter for that domain. But we don't have this big problem. Because we don't know the difference, mostly.

So we know Vajrasattva and we'll do it with the HUM. Or, if one has a bit of experience with the Dzogchen teaching, one can do very well with the AH. That's universal. Or if you

insist particularly to visualize Amitabha, you can do it with the HRI. And you visualize this letter in the central canal at the center of your body.

And then there's how you transfer, or, from where you transfer. In this case, you concentrate on the central channel. Let's take the example that you're shooting. We've already spoken of the target that you're shooting at. You need some kind of projectile or bullet to shoot. And that, we've said, is the letter AH, or the letter HUM, or the letter HRI. But now, you need a gun. You need the gun barrel through which you shoot. And the gun is, in effect, this central canal.

As is usually explained, you visualize this central channel as being as big as it comes to you that it is, whatever dimension, size, you see it as. If a person doesn't have any idea, no notion comes to mind, then an idea is given: you can visualize the channel as having the dimensions of a finger. In certain traditions, the Sakyapa tradition, they say that the dimension is that of a stalk of wheat, a stalk of grain.

If we learn about ten different traditions of phowa, we probably will learn ten different dimensions for the central channel. But that doesn't change anything. What is important is that one have a precise concentration, a visualization of a central channel now.

The most important thing is that this uma (dbu-ma), this central canal, be straight. You concentrate on it as near the spinal cord. It opens out at the top of the head, at what we call the gate or door of Brahma. That's the fontanelle, this depression in the middle of the head. And it narrows to a close about four finger-widths below the navel. Here it's not particularly important to visualize the other channels - that on the right, that on the left - that's not crucial here. Rather we're visualizing the central channel which is narrower at bottom and opens wider at the top.

It's said that this central channel is visualized as transparent, bluish on the outside. It's pinkish on the inside. And it's luminous inside. Towards the center of the body in this channel, you concentrate on your consciousness that which will depart, seen as the letter, let us say, the white AH.

And underneath that, you concentrate on or visualize the force of prana, the energy that's going to push it, in the form of a light green or clear bead, which is vibrating with its energy. You fix on, you concentrate on, this letter AH, and underneath it, this green, clear green bead or pellet, trembling with energy. These are the three principal considerations: where you transfer to, what transfers, how it's transferred.

To apply this really in practice, first of all, you do an invocation of the figure that you visualize before and above you. In many traditions, you visualize the whole lineage tree of the masters. You have a complicated, lengthy invocation of all of the lineage. And it's a very complex matter indeed. But the invocation doesn't work because it's a lot of words. What makes the invocation work is my participation, my sensation, my intensity of participation and feeling.

Even if you don't know all about where you're transferring to, and you don't know all the details of all the names of all the lineages, it's not important. What's important is that you understand clearly that where you're going to represents the unity, or the union of the state of all the masters, as we've talked and talked about that. And this invocation essentially is a request: "Give me a hand. Give me some help. I'm trying to shoot." Or "I'm trying to get out of here. I'm trying to do this transfer."

If I have had a bit of teaching, and know how to visualize the union of all the masters, or the presence of all the masters, surely that will give me some help. If I'm having some kind of trouble, or some kind of accident in the street, and I see somebody I know and call on him for help. If I see somebody I know, it's obvious that he'll be the first person I call on for help.

Let's say we're climbing up a high tree, or on a wall. Even if I'm very strong and very skillful at climbing, if I see somebody who's up there already, I'm likely to say "Here, give me a hand and help me up." It's much more likely that I'll succeed in getting up there. Otherwise, even though I feel very strong and able to get up there, I get half way up the tree, and my behind is just too heavy and drags me back down. So this is an example to understand.

When you do an invocation, this is what you're doing. You're asking for a helping hand. But this isn't something that you can make understood only by talking about it with many many words. Certainly, in general, if I have to communicate with a realized being, he doesn't have much need that I go into a lot of words. What is important is my participation, my intensity, in that moment of invocation, that I do it with strong feeling, that I mean it.

So if you don't know how to use all the right words and ritual formulas, you still have nothing to worry about. If you do know how to use them all, go right ahead. Do your best. Sometimes the words have a power, because they've come through transmission from the master.

Then, after the invocation, the next important thing is the breathing. You have to breath very very deeply. You inhale very very deeply, and then hold that breath. You do a kumbhaka, that is, a held breath. In the moment that you're doing the kumbhaka, that you're holding the breath, you visualize well this trembling pellet of prana energy, and the white AH that it carries. Then, while you're visualizing that, you sound the AH. You sound AH, AH, AH five times, at least five times. And as you're doing so, the trembling pellet of energy pushes the AH up the central channel.

You don't just think that the energy, the pellet, is pushing the AH up the channel. You also, with the held breath, the kumbhaka, push upward, and push the pellet and energy upward. You've learned how to do the kumbhaka, in particular the open kumbhaka, here doing yantra yoga. I'm not talking necessarily of that kumbhaka which must necessarily be [Barry here demonstrates effects of holding breath and not being able to speak] so that you can't open your mouth and can't speak.

You've read the the book of Alexandra David-Neel where

she talks a lot about the lunggomba (rlung-sgom-pa). There's a type of practice where you can do an open kumbhaka while holding the breath. You can also walk, and do that long lama walk. This is, among other reasons, why, in the yantra, we learn to do an open held breath.

So, sounding the series of AHs, the five or more AH AH AH AH and pushing upward with the held breath, pushing the energy and the AH up the central channel, till the AH is right at the exit, right at the gate of Brahma. Then when it's right there and ready to go, you sound the PHAT. And with that strong PHAT you let go all the breath that remains. And that's the moment that you've fired. And the white AH you see transferred to the very center of that which you visualized, the figure that you visualized above and before you.

Usually when we unify, when we're doing a Guruyoga, we see light or something streaming from that figure coming into oneself. And then we continue in contemplation. Here in the transfer, we're doing, in a sense, the opposite. But don't worry about something befalling you when you're doing this. We in fact have Guruyoga in the Semde series of Dzogchen teachings, in which I do visualize transfer of my state into the center of Samantabhadra, and that's how I effect the unification. Because if I go there, if I transfer, or that transfers to me, it's the same thing.

Many people worry that, if I do that, who knows, I might die. It's not that easy, or not usually so easy, to die. And then if you do die, having done that visualization so completely, what's the problem? You're much better off. But it's not really so very easy. But, since people have a lot of worry about that, for this reason, because of this preoccupation, there is a tradition where, when you say the PHAT, you consider that at the end it has the letter TRA. And, after a moment, after you've said the PHAT and transferred consciousness there, you say the TRA and you bring the consciousness back.

Or, we very often in the phowa use another sound like PHAT, which is HIK. But the function of the two, PHAT and HIK is the same. Because it's a very aspirated sound, and with it you throw out, you shoot out, all of the breath that you have accumulated. But this is not like an elongated Ha-a-a-a. But it's sharp. It's cutting. So it has a hard consonant sound at the end, either PHAT or HIK. If you like HIK better than PHAT you use it. People who are worried about staying out, through the transfer, use, after the HIK, a little KA.

If you train well in this, it becomes genuinely easy to transfer out in the moment of death, because you're actually very close to coming out. So it doesn't take a very big effort to get out. And in that case, it's very much easier to aim clearly, to direct your consciousness where you want it to go. In life, we train in this because of the preoccupation, if we have it, that, who knows if in the actual moment of death, I'll succeed in going into contemplation - this type of consideration.

Which means that you train yourself well, you practice, and at the moment of need, you apply it. And you can apply it very skillfully. It's said if somebody's falling off a cliff, in the moment before he hits at bottom, if he can succeed in

having these three considerations present, that is really quite a level of skill.

When you do this practice, there's actually a result. When one does the practice of the phowa, it's always pointed out that there are actual signs of the result. It's said that this zone becomes very very soft and penetrable. You can put tiny sticks there, or that you can feel a tickling. Everybody says that when this practice is done, the signs happen.

When I did the practice in the college, the master controlled each head, and found that, yes, the result had been obtained in each case. I did it twice. The first time there was no result because I was very little. I was thirteen years old. And I enjoyed very much running around and saying PHAT. Now in the college as a normal rule, you're not allowed to make a lot of noise. But the fact that we were practicing this finally gave me the possibility of making a lot of noise, saying PHAT.

And we were each in his own room where we weren't permitted to come out when we were practicing. And since I was in my own room, in my own room I have the right to do whatever I wish. I could hear down the hall people saying PHAT, people saying HIK. And I always answered every PHAT and HIK. For three weeks I dedicated my self to this. The truth is I hadn't understood very well how you visualized. And naturally from this there came no result. After two weeks the master controlled? [unclear] people, examined people, and found that many had had the result. To me he said at the end "Nothing. No result."

At that time I was the worst of them all. And the master, in fact, made me feel ashamed in front of everybody. Because in Tibet when one is considered as holding the title of "reincarnation", people invite you. Reincarnations are invited to come and perform the transfer. Certainly, many of these reincarnations actually have practiced the transfer and know how to do it well. So my master said "You should be the first to have had a result. The fact that you've had no result at all is really shameful." So he said this to me in front of everybody, and it really created shame.

A year later we did the practice again, and I had already understood how you do the visualization. And so, to not anger the master, I did the practice quite seriously. After two weeks, the master controlled, and said that everything had come out just as it should. The result was perfect.

But afterward there occurred something rather curious, because this practice is not only done for oneself. But I also learned how to do the transfer for others, to help people. And the principle of this I actually learned from my master Changchub Dorje who advised me that if one wants to practice the transfer in a way that genuinely helps the other, one has to first unify one's state with the state of the other.

So doing this through the capacity for contemplation, one can have a real effect. One can genuinely help others out of the body. This was an aspect that wasn't usually mentioned in the official teaching of the transfer that was given in the colleges. And this was the method that I used many, many times, when I was called upon to go perform the transfer for

others.

And in particular, the last time I performed the transfer for another, just before I left Tibet, that would be in 1958, in Lhasa where we were living in a big building, a big palace, there were about 50-odd families in that building. It was a house belonging to the Gaden (??) monastery, all rented homes. We were there, and on the floor below an old man died, an old man who had no family. And all of the people living in this building met together, and there was a meeting and a decision that they wanted to give him a funeral and do what was appropriate.

Where we were living, just in the building in front, lived a Gelugpa lama called Gengkarmag (??), a very elegant lama. He had at least three or four monks as servants. None the less he was quite a pleasant person, and we became friends. The people of the building went to that Gelugpa to ask him to do the transfer. And he came to me and said "You go and do the transfer." In fact, the people of the building hadn't invited me to do it. I said surely "I'll go." Because he had asked me seriously. He said he didn't have any experience of doing this. He wasn't able therefore to do it.

So I went with two of his monks. He sent two of his monks to help me. And there were three other people there with me. So we went down to the floor below where the old man had died. And he had died very very shortly before, not long before. And a whole crowd of people from the building were all crowding into the corridor, into the apartment to see.

By this time I was quite familiar with how the transfer is performed, because I had gone many many times to do the transfer for others. And I did the ritual as one normally does it. I was seated close to the head of the old man. And I did the transfer, the whole visualization, quite perfectly. And since I didn't feel quite perfectly confident I continued saying PHAT.

And then, since I wasn't an important personage there, since I just accepted to do someone a favor, I asked one of my assistants, a boy who is now in India, "Take a look at the head and see what's there, if the hair has fallen out or not." Because if the transfer is done right, the hair in that place falls out and leaves it bald. And he said "It doesn't seem to me that it's so". I said "Okay, sit down again."

And I did the visualization one more time, repeating a whole series of PHATs. More than this I couldn't do. My visualization was maximum. I said "Now we don't even look. That's enough. It's done." And we went away. And afterward the people started to prepare the body for burial in the cemetery, and they touched the body. What they found was that a piece of bone, a piece of the cranial bone with the hair on it, had, like, opened. It's like somebody had pulled a cork out of a bottle. And people were very amazed.

The next day everybody from that building was at my door, wanting a teaching, wanting this, wanting that. So for two or three days I was teaching them about how to do the transfer. So sometimes, you see, the phowa actually works. At times, it can be very useful for yourself. But at times, it can be very useful for helping another person at the time of their death. So what's very important, you have to have understood, is the

unification of the state, yours with that of the other person. And if you have some experience with contemplation, this is very easy. That's how you do the phowa. It's very simple without a lot of words.

For those who know it, we generally use an invocation. And there's a very commonly used invocation of the nyingthig. It's used in the Longchen Nyingthig (klong-chen snying-thig). It's an invocation. And another one is called the phowa jatsuma (??). Jatsuma means that when they place a blade of grass there, it remains. It can be fixed in that soft place. And sometimes that invocation is used.

Then there are many who also use an invocation of the Namcho (Nam-chos) and Namcho means the teaching of heaven. There was a tertön who at the age of 13 dictated more than twenty volumes of gongter (dgongs-gter), of mind terma. Maybe I explained this at one time. And in among these teachings, there's his phowa. And his phowa involves a specific invocation which is very very often used.

Then there are other invocations that are used in the Kagyudpa school, in the Nyingmapa school, in the Sakyapa school. There are various invocations. If somebody knows how to use one or more of these, excellent. But if you don't know how to use one of these, there's no reason to be discouraged. As I've already explained, the principal consideration is the intensity of feeling, participation of the individual. That's what makes phowa work. And now we're done.

[Monday morning, 26-Jul-82]

We've explained these days the base, first of all, and that we've explained again and again these days. And I think that all of you more or less have an idea of what's involved. Through knowledge of that, one is guided on the path and into contemplation. How you arrive in contemplation, and with what means you continue in contemplation, is also something we've spoken of a great deal. Above all, yesterday and the day before yesterday, what we spoke of in great detail was how to arrive at contemplation and how to continue in it.

In the teachings of the Semde system of Dzogchen, and also in teachings of the Longde, there are many explanations of how one develops the nyams of experience in practice. There's also much discussion of how one deals with obstacles in contemplation, such as excessive agitation and nervousness on the one hand, or drowsiness on the other.

In the teaching, in particular in the system of the Upadesha, those nyams and obstacles, whatever may arise, are considered to be on the level of tsal, that is, on the level of energy expressing itself as if objective. Whatever sensation, whatever awareness of nyams there may be, it is not the state of rigpa. Since there are not, and there have never been, and cannot be, any defects in meditation, in the sense of defects in contemplation as such, therefore at the Upadesha level, no trouble is taken to analyze the nyams and possible defects.

Rather all of this is explained and dealt with through the method of self-liberation. Whatever appears, whether it be nyam or not a nyam, is dealt with through self-liberation. If some kind of obstacle presents itself at the moment of contemplation, one self-liberates it. In this case clearly, what becomes of crucial importance is the principle of self-liberation. And we know that the Dzogchen teaching itself is called the path of self-liberation. So this too demonstrates that this is a theme that requires clear understanding. So let's proceed to deepen this consideration now.

First of all in regard to self-liberation, we say tsogdrug rangdrol (tshogs-drug rang-grol), that is, we speak of the self-liberation of the six aggregations. And this embraces a bit everything. What does tsogdrug mean? Aggregate. What does that imply or mean? The object, consciousness of it, and that which sustains the consciousness, or wangpo (dbang-po). This means really that when there are the senses, then there's sensory contact. There's contact with the object, with the objective, with the apparently outside. And from this arises an aggregation.

First of all we see a beautiful object. We see that object, and that immediately is one of the aggregations. This is seen by a wangpo. Wangpo means that which supports the senses. And in this case, that which supports the sense of seeing is the eye, the white, black, whatever. ?? eyes which do the seeing. So this material, or matter, of the senses, the organs of the senses, are called wangpo. These have their function in generating shaypa (shes-pa), consciousness.

The wangpo, the organ of seeing, or the organ of the sense, exists also without consciousness. For example, a dead

person still has eyes. But without the wangpo, without the physical support of the senses, in the case of seeing for example, there's no way of seeing by consciousness alone, by shaypa alone.

When one has the capacity to see, or otherwise sense, through shaypa alone, through consciousness alone, without the use of wangpo, that is, without the use of the physical organs and physical support, that's called real vision. And this ?? realization. We or normal human beings without that capacity are always obliged to aggregate, to put together, these three elements, that is, the seeing, the vision, sensing, the physical sustenance or support of that sensing, the wangpo, and the shaypa, the consciousness. These three together are an aggregation.

With these three together, with this aggregation, we perceive, in this case see, and that perception is communicated to the mind. When that communication arrives at the mind, then we have judgment, and we have what we call the consciousness of the mind. This judging which arises after the communication, after it's grasped what has been perceived, is called in the Sutras the consciousness of the passions, because it implies the whole judgment of good, of evil, of pleasing, of displeasing, and already generates attitudes towards it. That is to say, this perceiving performed through the eyes, has now entered through judgment into action, and we're moving towards doing something about it, responding to it.

Here we've used the example of vision, of sight. But we have obviously the other senses, such as hearing with the ears, and the sense of smell with the nose. Through all of these, the modes of sensing, when there arises the consciousness of the mind, that is, the consciousness of the passions, we always divide what's experienced into good or bad.

For example some vision, some seeing, is always judged as either ugly or beautiful. Thereafter comes the consequence, logically that if it's beautiful it's accepted, and if it's perceived as ugly, it's refused. Similarly sound is perceived either as sweet, or as strident, as unpleasant. People who are tranquil and quiet, and quickly put on some music, it's considered that music doesn't annoy or disturb, but is believed to be pleasant and comfortable. Let's say you're sleeping, and there's a mouse scratching at the door. That's not perceived as pleasant. That's perceived as an annoyance.

And there are many other sounds that are far heavier still. There are people who like to be told always that "You're really wonderful. You're exceptional and very good." If people are told instead "You're unpleasant", they don't enjoy that. It's exactly the same way with our eyes, with our senses, with our e rY we live in the same fashion with these two values and kind of judgments.

The same is true of odor. Similar with odor, there is what is smelled. There's how the odor is taken in or absorbed through the nose of the physical organ. There's the consciousness that arises from this. When these are aggregated together, a judgment is made. There arises either pleasure or displeasure. People will pay a high price for a

pleasant odor, which is a perfume made in France. And on the other hand when they have to pass some place where there's a real stink, they close their noses. Because we're very limited, very boxed in, on this kind of point.

And this is how these contacts made with aggregations, or through aggregations, function. The same is true of taste with the tongue. We're always talking about food and what's best to eat. The same is true of the sense of touch, our contact with our garments. And then there's the mind. There's the mind which judges, ?? give pleasure or displeasure. And sometimes we notice why we make the judgment, because there's some motivation for that. And then at other times, we don't notice or discover what the motivation is. Or for no motive at all, without reason, we feel like weeping.

So there's always a clear distinction between positive and negative. And now we're talking about self-liberating from all of this. But we're talking about self-liberating from all that, which does not mean abandoning or refusing it as is done on the path of renunciation. Nor do we propose to transform it into something else. Rather we're saying self-liberation.

Self-liberation, if one has lesser capacity, is achieved from the beginning, through presence, through awareness, of the state. That is to say, it's not that one blocks one's awareness of the passions, but rather that one finds oneself in one's state, and in their state, and therefore is not conditioned by the passions.

We've explained many many times using the example of a mirror. If we find ourselves, if perhaps we have the awareness, and the knowledgeableness, to find ourselves in the state of the capacity of the mirror, we're like the mirror, which means that our state and our consciousness are limpid, pure, clear, living in their capacity to reflect just like the mirror as such.

When we see a mirror, a mirror can reflect anything. A mirror doesn't have to block certain reflections, or hide certain reflections. But even if the mirror reflects any and everything, it remains as it is. It is what it is. When the mirror reflects beautiful things, it's not that the mirror is delighted or that some specially good experience is happening. When the mirror reflects filth, it's not that the mirror has been dirtied or made filthy.

This is analogous to us when we find ourselves in our state of contemplation. When we find ourselves in the state of contemplation, there's nothing whatsoever that's capable of conditioning that state. It may be that one is not capable of finding oneself in that state in the moment when the passions manifest, or in the moment when the senses enter consciousness. Then it's easy that one be conditioned.

Then in all contacts, in whatever contacts may come, during such contacts, one tries to be present, to be immediately aware, and to find oneself in one's state. In this way, finding oneself present, trying to be in the state, one self-liberates anything that arises.

When we speak more globally, we say self-liberation of zungwa (bzung-ba) and zinpa ('dzin-pa). Zungwa means the

dualism, passions

object, and zinpa means the subject. The self-liberation of the zungwa is illustrated with the way a rainbow disappears. When we see a rainbow, it's very beautiful. And it dissolves, disappears, on its own. Even if you want to hang on and keep the rainbow, you can't. There's nothing to do with that rainbow. It disappears on its own. When it disappears, you have no way of defining where it disappeared to, or how it disappeared. It's gone.

With our senses, when there's self-liberation, it's not that it disappears, that the object disappears as does the rainbow, but rather that which disappears is every capacity that it might have to condition one, every way of working that might leave an imprint of a conditioning kind. When we have a precise concept of the object, from there comes every kind of attachment and conditioning.

Then when we speak of zinpa, that is, the concept or the subject, here the illustration is used of a thief who arrives in an empty house, looks into an empty house. [tape gap] It would seem that in the mind there are many many programs. There's a continuously operating set of concepts. But if you really go to look it in the face, it all disappears. There's nothing there that can be affirmed. So it self-liberates on its own.

Let's say a person says "I'm having a recurrent bad thought. And it's an obsessive thought. Even if I don't want to think about it, it keeps coming back." Certainly the principle is that thought cannot be blocked. And if you keep trying to not think of it, it comes back even more intensely. But if you observe the thought, if you stop to look it in the face, it self-liberates. And this is illustrated with the phrase "like a thief who has entered into an empty house".

A thief doesn't go into an empty house, because if he's a thief, he's there to steal. He's not a visitor of houses. And so he's entered into the house, and he's got a precise concept, robbing, stealing, something. He has the precise concept that he get his hands on something, and take it away, and he has a precise notion that there would be something there to take. He gets into the house, and there's nothing at all. That's quite a surprise. He doesn't know what to do. His mouth gapes open. He leaves. It's a bit like that. We have so many thoughts, so many programs, so many circuits at work, it would seem that there's something there. But when you stop and observe it, there's nothing at all.

Then another thing that seems so important. We can stop and analyze, our passions. The passions arise after the mechanism we spoke of as the aggregation. When we said that the aggregations self-liberate, it means there's not even a way of getting to the point where there's passions.

But if a person is rather inexperienced, then even though there's the liberation, something remains which can be perceived, and which leads on into the arising of passions. And therefore the passions, when they're acted on as passions, are passions. In Tantrism it's said that the five passions when they're transformed manifest as the five wisdoms.

In Dzogchen we say they're to be self-liberated. It's not necessary to transform something into something else. But right from the beginning, right from the bottom, you

attachment

self-liberate, and it manifests as wisdom. And this means finding this in its condition as it is.

For example, you see something very beautiful. And the idea arises "Gee that's wonderful. How beautiful that is. I like that." With this pleasure, this liking, arises attachment. If I follow that liking and follow it into action, and taken by it into action normally, this is attachment. And we're speaking of a passion. That is, the pleasure I take in that object, whatever it may be, is capable of dominating and governing or conditioning me. Without even knowing it perhaps, I've become in some sense a slave of that thing. I'm now at its service. And I dedicate my body, voice, and mind to that, out of which comes the production of more karmic actions. That's how I continue to transmigrate. This is what we mean by passions conditioning the individual.

Instead if one knows what the principle is right from the start, then the passions are not a way of being conditioned, but the passions provide, and are, the energy of one's dimension, of one's way of being. The fact that one's state, or the state of that individual, is alive, is present, is vividly here, is indicated by ?? the happening of passion.

We've trained very well and we've clearly grasped the notion that where there's the state of rigpa, there's also gyowa, movement. The functioning or working of passions is at the level of gyowa. So one is present in, and one with, this state of movement, of vividness, of life. And one is never conditioned by the passions. And this is what we call self-liberation. One is self-liberated, also continually finding oneself, continually being, in this state.

In the Semde teachings of Dzogchen, there are many ways of training with the passions for self-liberation. For example, you're tranquil in your house. Instead of being in perfect position like a statue, with incense, and everything ideal, or reciting mantras or whatever, it's just not that type of practice.

Instead you think of something, a person with whom you have some hostility. You think of what that person said to you, why I experience such antipathy, such hostility. And I define and articulate two, three, four items which really anger me, or annoy me. And I let myself charge up a bit with this thought of his noxious points, until I really generate some rage. And then I stop and observe that awareness.

We also have this in practice, that is, concretely what generates this passion until it's really coming, and then stops to see it. Just before you would go into action with it, you observe it and self-liberate it. There's a way of training oneself in this fashion which is very much used. It's also a very simple way of doing it. It's not that you have to go and speak or to perform some particular behavior. We have no lack of passions to work with at every moment.

It's not that the only passion is attachment, or the passion must always become attachment. There are many ways of dealing with it. It can be rage. It can be jealousy. It can be pride. When you observe a bit, you find something. These are very important ways of training yourself in self-liberation. We speak of self-liberation, but it mustn't just remain words. It has to be carried into practice.

nyams

Nyams, beautiful or ugly, or obstacles, whatever arises, are all dealt with in this fashion. Let's say that in practice we experience just a fantastic wonderful nyam. You think "Gee. It's incredible. How wonderful. Perhaps this is realization." Right there and then that means that's an attachment, and therefore a very big obstacle.

Someone says "Oh one day I had an extraordinary vision of light. How pleased I would be if it would happen again, but it doesn't always come. What do I have to do, tell me, to have this experience again." What I would tell them is "Do a little breathing." But the truth is, this very desire that they're expressing, that's attachment. We have to remember always when we say in the chod, that we commit ourselves to go beyond hope and fear, both of them.

Some texts of the Semde speak of these nyams as being rainbows in autumn. In autumn, at the end of summer when there's heavy rain, there are many many rainbows. And one minute there's a rainbow, and the next minute there's not. The next minute there's a double rainbow, and the next minute there's not. Why is it? It's because there ?? our elements, their ways of working, and with practice, these nyams arise. One has to understand that these are manifestations of one's own condition, however it is.

I'm not saying that one has to pretend that nothing happened, or make believe it didn't occur. Certainly a practitioner must be knowledgeable about the nyams, be aware of them. But it does mean that one doesn't create attachment to them.

In general many practitioners of Tantrism, of the path of transformation, when people who visualize themselves and transform into a heruka, many times it happens they say "I had a vision of this heruka." ??, it could be true. Sometimes a vision can mean that the dimension that's perceived by the practitioner is the dimension of the Sambhogakaya at that moment. Because I am training myself for realization.

But many people imagine that what happened is "That divinity paid me a visit". And they get very happy and cheerful about this. And then as soon as they get that happy feeling, the vision disappears. And if they're attached enough to it, that vision won't come back for a long long time. So attachment can arise in many many ways, also with one unaware and not noticing it.

When in the Buddhist Sutras, in the Buddhist Sutras they speak of two kinds of obstacles, obstacles from the passions and obstacles arising from knowledge. Those obstacles arising from the passions are easier to deal with because you can renounce them, or you can find some sort of antidote for them.

But obstacles arising from knowledge, it is said, persist until one arrives at a relatively high bhumi of Bodhisattvahood. For example when they say the tenth bhumi, which means from the Sutric point of view, practically on the threshold of illumination, total illumination, although you still haven't manifested as a Buddha, they say "Why hasn't that individual yet manifested as a Buddha?" They say "Because there are subtle traces of obstacles arising from knowledge." Which means that it's very complex and difficult to notice these kinds of obstacles.

When we speak of the way of seeing, we all often say that it's important not to create for oneself a new cage of crystal, that is, a new transparent cage made of crystal. And this is one of the elements that we're talking about. So it's very important in the teaching of Dzogchen that one understands very well what's meant by self-liberation and that one applies it, puts it into action.

Then the capacity, to speak of the capacity and the way of developing the capacity, for this application, we speak of cherdrol (gcer-grol), shardrol (shar-grol), and rangdrol (rang-grol), that is, three principles, three ways, and three levels of self-liberation. It's not said that you necessarily have to pass through these three levels. But it's a description of how self-liberation is applied at different levels of capacity of the person.

With cherdrol, the first one, it's as if one were fixing one's gaze or fixing one's attention, fixing on the object of self-liberation. In Tibetan cher, for example, micherwa (mi-gcer-ba), means the eyes really wide open, and fixed staring at something. We're not talking necessarily about the eyes. We can be speaking about the mind, about one's consciousness, one's attention, being fixed. I'm lying in bed tranquil. It's dark. With my eyes I see nothing. But something strange arises in the mind. It's not that I open the eyes to stare at this thing. Rather that I fix the attention of the mind squarely on it. This is cherwa.

But this cherwa is not necessarily fixing attention on the object to judge it. But if one is aware of that which is happening "I'm growing angry. I'm beginning to get angry" and I focus my attention on that anger itself, I self-aware and look the anger in the face. This is not the same as thinking "What is it that made me angry?" or "What is it? Why did he make me angry" or something of the sort. Many people make the error of thinking that when we say self-observe a passion, that what they have to do is think about the reasons and introspectively examine the causes for that passion.

When we spoke of searching one's thoughts, looking for the source, the location, the destination, of thoughts etc., we were talking about working with the mind. Here we're not talking about thinking, reasoning, working with the mind. Self-liberation has to be understood as happening in the present and in the continuing present. And, here one is observing in the present moment and continuing to observe in the succeeding present moments.

In cherdrol it's as if there's a minimum effort. There's a certain force of attention. One actually puts the attention onto that which is being observed, the object of self-liberation. For example if a passion arises, in that moment there's a recognition that the passion is arising. And there's also an awareness of self-liberation certainly. In that instant one observes that. And that's what's meant by cherdrol. When one observes, when one puts that awareness of self-liberation there, it self-liberates. If one has the capacity for contemplation, then one is in contemplation and one continues in it.

The illustration for, the example given for, cherdrol is that it's like a drop of dew in the early morning which as

soon as it's touched by the sunlight dissolves. This is the illustration of this way in which self-liberation can take place instantaneously as soon as the sunlight strikes the drop of dew. The notion is not that of an antidote, that the sunlight is like an antidote which will dissolve something. This is the description of lesser capacity. A person who is less able, or less experienced in self-liberation has to make this little effort to accomplish self-liberation, has to place awareness there.

If a person has a little more capacity or is a little more familiar with self-liberation, then we say shardrol. Shar means to arise or emerge. That is, at the moment of arising or emergence of the thoughts, or at the moment of arising or emergence of passions, or at the moment of arising or emergence of sensory contact, contact with the senses, in any case, whichever of these it be at the moment of arising or emergence, there arises the awareness which self-liberates. That is, there's less need for an effort, for putting attention there.

It's like the snow falling into the sea. At the instant of contact, the snow melts, dissolves. There's no more snow. Thus the snow is reintegrated into the water. That is, one is capable of reintegrating everything. Something that's considered negative creates no problem. In the instant of arising arises also its self-liberation.

For example we have, if we want to do some shinay, we're likely to say "I've got to find myself a quiet place to do it. Because if it's not a quiet secluded place, I'll be bothered by all the movement and the noise and everything." But when one becomes a little more familiar with shinay, when one becomes more familiar with this, one can reintegrate all the noise and movement and bustle. It's true that when we hear some unpleasant noise nearby like a motor turning, "Rrrrrr", churning, while practicing, it can disturb us. Why does it disturb us? Because we have a preconception that that's disturbing. We haven't integrated it.

If we have the capacity to integrate, if we have real integration happening, nothing is capable of annoying or disturbing us. If one doesn't have this capacity for reintegration, for integration, then there exists this whole problem of pleasing or displeasing. When one is rather familiar with integration, you can be in the main railroad station of a large city and continue your contemplation.

That means shardrol, that capacity for self-liberation, has become rather familiar, through the application of contemplation. Through the practice of contemplation and the application of shardrol, becoming fully familiar with it, all things can be integrated. And day by day integration becomes more real.

Yesterday we gave an example that a finger placed in a fire results in a burn. Why? Because these two things, finger and fire, present themselves as two. But if my finger is the same as, is integrated with, the condition of fire, there's no burning. When we tell the life story of Padmasambhava, it's said that Padmasambhava was to be burned by the King of the Sahora, that there was much oil and sandalwood. He was to be burned alive. But at a certain

moment Padmasambhava was seen manifest in the midst of the flames. And right in the middle of this blaze, far from being burned, he manifested, it's said, as fresh as a newly watered flower in a garden.

We can think of this in two ways. We can think "Oh my goodness. What a miracle!" Or we can think it's a fable. It's a story. Because people tell you something you may not believe. For us it's not something normal or acceptable. Fire burns people. Padmasambhava had a body. It should have burned. That's our logic. For which reason our thought is either that it didn't happen or that it was a miracle. Miracle is what we call something that happened beyond our limitations.

But if one understands the actual principle, the so-called miracle is an example of integration and nothing very peculiar. For someone who doesn't succeed in integrating, then that remains something beyond his limitations, beyond his ?? We in general think that a miracle is inexplicable, because it is a miracle. But that simply demonstrates lack of knowledge. Because a miracle means that something manifests beyond our limitations, beyond our ??. But obviously we judge it through our limitations and it isn't measurable by us. It isn't understandable. So what's important is to understand the principle of this type of self-liberation, shardrol, and to understand that it is applicable by us.

Then after this comes self-liberation at the level of superior capacity, what's called in Tibetan rangdrol. Rang means one's own, that is, the "own-ness", that which is proper to, that which is germane to whatever thing. That is, it's automatic self-liberation. It's become a property of oneself. It's become a property of the thing as such. And in general when we use the term "self-liberation", it's this we're referring to, where self-liberation has become proper to one, oneself. This means that things are rather integrated so that whatever it is that manifests, self-liberates.

When we speak of practice we speak of the great contemplation. The great contemplation means beyond time. It means that all our temporal limitations have passed over into contemplation. Until we reach that condition, we speak of nyamzhag (mnyam-bzhag) and jaythob (rjes-thob). Nyamzhag means that one is in contemplation at all levels of practice.

Jaythob means that one is not in practice or not in meditation or contemplation. And in that regard we speak of attitude and behavior. We say we must not be distracted. We have to be aware and present. But that very saying implies that jaythob exists. That is, that there is a part of your life when you're not in contemplation, and therefore have to adopt this behavior of not being distracted, of being present, of being aware.

When one has transcended this limitation of time, this border between being in contemplation, being out of contemplation, we call that the great contemplation. Or we say the dimension of contemplation, tingzin gongyud (ting-'dzin dgongs-rgyud ??). And there exists then nothing other than self-liberation, rangdrol.

Until then what we're practicing or applying, we're

nyams

actually doing is self-liberation either in the style of cherdrol or shardrol. It's not that we don't do rangdrol. It's just that the ice is still rather thick. And rangdrol hasn't yet become something concrete.

So the first thing you try is cherdrol, self-liberation when one becomes aware of whatever, or pays attention to whatever. You have to understand that this explanation of rangdrol, shardrol, cherdrol is not just an abstract analysis, but we're actually talking about something you apply, something you try to do, and do in life.

If one doesn't apply this, then all that one thinks of as one's knowledge of Dzogchen is just abstraction. Because contemplation is something we have very little time for, and all the rest of the time we live in distraction, and so we say "Try not to be distracted." To learn a bit to not be distracted means precisely that one begins to acquire this awareness which is self-liberation.

For applying these things, there is no particular way you have to commit your body and voice. That is, there's no particular position, or breathing, or anything of the kind. That is to say, one can apply these, wanting to, at any moment. And this is why we speak of practice brought into daily life. This is the explanation of self-liberation.

And with this we've more or less completed the path. The path we speak of as the way of seeing and then practicing, putting into action. Because we need to complete and close a bit all the explanations that we've given. Time has passed quickly and we're almost at the end.

Many people are disturbed that I can't explain it all in one day, put it all together in one particular day. Because many people don't succeed in being here enough time to follow all of the different things. And some people say "Which day is it better that I come?" or "Which days should I come?" I don't know how to tell them, because I try to give as much as I can, to be complete each day.

My hope is at least in the whole arc of time of the retreat, in the whole gamut of time in the retreat, there's been a complete explanation. So that afterwards, if somebody wants for example to re-hear it, wants to listen to it, there's something complete available to them. This is what we're doing. There are still a few things to explain, presumably tomorrow. And then as regards explanation we're pretty much done.

But the explanation is intended to give rise to application. I make an explanation as much as possible which becomes immediately applicable. If I know something which is rather complex, I try to get to the meaning of it, to the conclusion of it, so as to give you something that's genuinely usable.

Moreover it's not that I explain and then I disappear. You have to know this too. What you've learned you have to try to apply a bit concretely. And then it's quite another thing when you're doing something. It becomes more and more concrete, and then the next thing does too. And I'll be explaining things at other times.

And then in the world there's not only I myself but there are many masters who explain and teach. I'm sure that if

you've understood a bit, then when you follow some other master and listen to some other master, you'll understand much better. So applying this, everything will become more concrete and more comprehensible. And that's the work we're doing in short.

Many people say to me "But aren't you coming back next year?" Certainly I'll be coming. I'll continue to be coming. It's not that I'm going to disappear. Particularly in America which is a larger country, there are many, many people. It's just that I'm not the kind of person who lives shut in one place, nailed down to one place.

I'm in Italy because there's work for me there. I have to work to earn my living because I'm a normal person. I have to earn my living. And this is how I prefer to live. I don't like to earn my bread as a missionary. Because right from the bottom I don't consider the teaching to be in that way, as a profession or as a way of earning a living.

And then also I think that the teaching is to be taken in a living way into our social reality. Because the teaching is something in the common interest of all. And "all" does not mean just a particular intellectual group. Nor does it mean for people who have advantages and particular possibilities. "For all" means for that matter those who are interested and those who are not interested. Certainly we never go to people who are not interested and insist on explaining to them.

But we know perfectly well that in regard to a teaching like Dzogchen, those who are today not interested can tomorrow easily become interested. Because it's a teaching which corresponds to the real interest and condition of the individual. The teaching is not something like a dogma or a type of religion. Rather the teaching represents and speaks to our real needs as individuals. Every individual wants to be better off, wants to be well. But not only temporarily, provisionally, but also definitively well off. And this is the principle of the individual as such and of his existence. And the Dzogchen teaching communicates this and makes this understood.

It's not that we have to construct something. Nor is it some kind of religious form, nor does it imply a particular group or form of any kind. So no one exists who is not at some level, in some sense, interested in this. Rather one discovers that if the Dzogchen teaching is well communicated, if it is clearly transmitted to a person, then you discover that you hadn't known what was meant by a teaching.

So for me it's the case that this has to exist and be present right in the normal human situation. For example, when we talk about a teaching, a religion, we always think that it's followed only by people who are deeply interested. And think that there are people who say and consider that they don't believe in anything, or people who are very politically engaged. And then today the political people speak badly of the teaching and of religion. We think "Well this type of teaching is not communicable to such people."

But I've seen that the Dzogchen teaching is not like this, that it can be communicated to anyone. I was convinced for example that one couldn't even speak a word of Dzogchen to the Chinese. I was sure that nobody would be interested.

Because I was convinced that they were completely steeped in Marxism, fanatically Marxist. But when I spoke to them, when we spoke to many people there, I realized that the problem was that they didn't understand why such a teaching exists, what such a teaching is.

As soon as I spoke, when we spoke to many Chinese, the first thing they had to say was about religion, Buddhism, the church, monks. And they make criticisms of the exploitation by monks who don't work, of people who do work. But for me, all that's of no interest at all. I went and discussed and pointed out that the principle of the teaching is not a church, nor some institution. But rather the principle is the condition of the individual as such.

So I would explain a bit about the body, voice, and mind, how we are conditioned by these, and how people who so much believe in politics have made themselves slaves of an idea, and how they can very easily experience a big disappointment tomorrow. And that's not true just for politics, but also for religion. So I explain this in every possible way. We had lots of discussions on this point. Many who were convinced that they very well know and understood Buddhism, Chinese scholars, were very surprised "We didn't know that this was the principle."

Above all when one speaks of the principle of Dzogchen one doesn't insist "Everything I say is perfect", but rather one uncovers exactly what one's condition actually is. It's not necessary to go and attack saying "You're conditioned by your ideology" but rather one thinks a bit, one thinks a bit about just what the mirror is. And one discovers how conditioned one is oneself. That's the power of the Dzogchen teaching. And this is its power before any kind of religion, any and every kind of ideology, any and every kind of political conviction.

I say this is its power. Why? Because it's the condition of the truth. And this corresponds, this responds, to the needs of everyone, of every individual. So this is why there exists something which is really based on something. It's really very important and very solid. And this is the knowledge. And to expand the knowledge of Dzogchen means to expand the knowledge of this principle. It doesn't just mean to expand a certain text or a certain tradition.

And to teach means to awaken individuals. Awakening individuals means that tomorrow there will be many persons who know this personally. And this can become a great help to the human condition in general.

So from the very beginning, my idea and my choice is to be a normal human being. When I first got to Sikkim, at first, the first days, I really had great difficulty. I arrived with a little money, and I spent all that money thinking that I'd be returning to Tibet. Afterward when I understood that I couldn't return, one couldn't return, because all the entries were blocked, what little money I'd had was already beginning to end.

I looked around to see how the other Tibetans were living. I saw that people like me managed by doing rites and going where they were invited to hold some ceremony. And many people, I too, had many invitations. Many people called for

nyams

me to perform rites and ceremonies. Right from the start I thought "No, that's not the work I'm going to do. I'll try to eat and stay alive in some other way."

So I went and asked the government of Sikkim to give me a job. They gave me a job in what they called their development office, helping to prepare textbooks for high schools. And I also went and performed any other functions that was at this office. In this way I earned money to live. And that's how I lived until I left for Italy.

In Italy too as is normal I preferred to work. And that still is the case. Now too I continue to work. In two or three years I'll be able to go on pension. They're not going to give me a great big pension, but this is a consequence of work I've done all my life. I quite surely will live in that way. But if I'm on pension I'll be freer. And that means I'll go where I like. And I will conduct many retreats and do many things for the Dzogchen teachings.

So you see it's not that I come here and then disappear from circulation. I'll surely come here many times. Then next year my program is to go to China. Many people think "Gee whiz, if he goes to China, who knows if he'll ever get out again?" And many people also last year when I went to China were very anxious about it, because they thought that way. But if I go it means that there's a possibility, and there's a reason for going.

Right now there's a very precise motive for going because they've invited me. They've given me many possibilities of working with the Tibetan books that they've brought to Peking. This is very important for Tibetan culture and also in regard to the teaching. At the moment they've given me this invitation and I have to go because you never know for the future. There's always impermanence. But this is the famous, everybody is talking about "He's going to China." But I'm actually going for five or six months.

So now each summer for three years I've come to America and we've done a retreat. This means quite surely next summer it won't be possible. But not having done a retreat in the summer doesn't mean the world is ended. After the summer comes the autumn. After the autumn comes the winter. And that's how time continues.

So we will continue as we can, according to our capacities and possibilities. So in this case it's very important that each of you does something really concrete. So that means when we come next time, there'll be something more to do. Just like last year I said "This year we're doing the practice of the Longde. And next year" I said, we said, "we'll do a bit of practice of the Upadesha." And this is how things proceed. OK.

breathing, recite the vajra

[Friday afternoon ??, 30-Jul-86]

I would like to explain first of all some things that I was asked about. People ask me to explain certain things. I was asked to explain a bit about breathing, in particular about how in Sutric Buddhism breathing is part of practice. In Sutric Buddhism and also in certain aspects of Tantra, breathing is used to guide toward, and guide in, kind of a shinay.

There are two precise reasons for this. One is to not be distracted. Although there may not be much discussion, though you're not told not to be distracted, with this mindfulness of breathing, a kind of presence follows automatically. In the logical studies of the Sutra an example is given. They ask him about past and future lives and the explanation of karma. They asked Chandrakirti. He was posed this question. And Chandrakirti replied "Watch how you breathe." That means after an in breath, there automatically follows an out breath. And if you want to, after you've breathed out, if you want to do so again, you have to first breath in, obligatorily.

This is something a person does as long as they're alive. And if one is aware of this, if one is continuously mindful of this, one cannot be distracted. So that if one is aware of one's breathing, if one maintains mindfulness of it, fixes on it, fixes attention on it, automatically this guides one's awareness.

And another principle which is spoken of in regard to breathing, both in Sutric and in Tantric Buddhism, is that breathing is directly linked to prana, to vital energy. And the working of the mind, how it presents itself, is always connected with how one's breathing presents itself.

So there are many different types of breathing, for example that we do in yantra yoga. The methods of breathing in yantra yoga, in Tantrism, in Sutra, are not necessarily the same however. But the principle of knowledge, mainly that breathing is linked to the mind and to the state of mind, is common to all these levels.

A statement is made that the mind is like a man who hobbles, a limper. Whereas breathing it's said is like a blind horse. So when you have a semi-cripple, someone who's hobbling leading a blind horse, trying to get where he wants to go, it always ends up in trouble. When this horse is under control and tied with a strong rope, then the hobbling man, the crippled man, doesn't arrive where he wants to go. This hobbling man doesn't arrive where, doesn't go where, the horse wants to take him, but rather where he wants to go.

Consequently, when breathing is guided and controlled, mind is more easily led to shinay. So the principle is not only during contemplation, but at all times one tries to have the maximum possible awareness or presence of one's breathing. In practice in the system of Dzogchen, there's no particular indication of fixing on, or particularly being mindful of, breathing.

But there are ways of applying a control of breathing, as for example in the recital of the vajra. When you're reciting the vajra, breathing the recitation of the vajra, you're automatically linking breathing with the energy of mantra.

culture, education

Certainly if someone is distracted and not minimally present and mindful, he can't do that. So automatically there's a requirement for the working of awareness or mindfulness. So practice, while presented in various different ways, always works on the same principles.

Another person asked me "How do you use your own culture, personal culture, in practice." In order to understand the teaching this is extremely important. This implies that one knows what's meant by the teaching. Because whatever type of teaching it is, it must proceed according to the mind of the individual. A teaching is always a means towards realization. But realization is accomplished, is found, in the state of the individual.

For example when we die, we arrive at the cemetery. Even if one believes in rebirth and expects to continue in transmigration, your body still remains at the cemetery. Or if we're talking about an exceptional individual, a realized being, his body is still there in the tomb or in the grave. What that means is that realization is not, strictly speaking, linked or necessarily linked to the physical body.

When we speak of the culture of a country or of an individual, we're talking about something that is directly linked to the material body. A child is born. It receives a name. That name is received according to the language and the habits of his country. From there begin all of his many contacts with the material. We speak of the child as entering into society. And its society is always represented by material facts.

The individual also has his way of working, his energy, and his mind. And since energy and mind are dependent upon this material body, they're obliged to follow it. This is what we mean by culture, how one lives, and what the person is tied to, and tied into.

So in this way a person from the time they're a small child is continually receiving a certain education, a certain formation. This education also becomes for that person a means of knowing. So now if that person has to understand something that's genuinely profound, he finds it easiest to do so through the knowledge that he already has.

And if one knows how to use that, that's much the simplest matter. This first way of understanding can be used as a way of understanding the teaching or in order to understand the teaching, but above all, to know how to understand the teaching. If a teaching has existed and lived in a given country, it means it continued for years and years or centuries with the culture of that country.

Now it may be the case that my culture and the culture of that country are very different. Sometimes people get confused and don't understand what's the culture of that country and what's the teaching. And this one has to learn to distinguish very sharply if one wants to understand clearly what the teaching is.

Certainly it doesn't mean that I can't absorb into my culture some of the culture of another country. It's not necessary that one remain boxed into such a limitation. But it's not always easy to take, to absorb, all of the culture of another country.

prostrations

For example, a Tibetan from the very beginning, right from right up front, has a way of approaching, a way of getting near to, the teaching. It is as much one of his habits as the habits that he has which are linked directly to his physical and material body. For example we see when Tibetans present themselves before a master, they prostrate themselves. And this practice, these prostrations, for that matter are inserted right into practice. They form part of the practice of the ngondro.

When a Tibetan goes into a monastery, first of all he walks around the temple a certain number of times. Many old people, not knowing how to dedicate themselves to the teaching but wanting to do so, go every day to the monastery and walk around it as their practice. I'm not just talking about walking around the monastery or doing prostrations, but there are hundreds of these usages which have to do with the physical body.

A westerner may not even understand what the principle is or why people do those things. A westerner may go to a master, see the Tibetans do this, and copy that, thinking that he's learned a very important lesson. He may spend a lot of time learning how to do a prostration perfectly. Since this culture has been inserted into us, has become a part of the teaching for centuries and centuries, so its explanations and justifications have also grown. There are elaborate explanations of how to do a prostration, how one should stand before doing so, how one should bend, what the positions are, what the consequences of erring even in the slightest detail will be, and so forth.

Above all, for people who don't enter into the meaning of the teachings, they become fascinated by this external culture. And in this way they expand upon and elaborate this for years and years. And there are numberless of these relative details and relative matters connected to the teaching which one can learn.

These things, why did they develop? Because they're considered, and were considered, as positive actions. And positive actions can be accumulated and become an accumulation of merit. Why does one accumulate good action? Because they become good actions, because while doing these actions, one had a good intention. When one has a good intention, that's fundamental to the accumulation of a good action. Knowing this principle gives still more attention to each detail so that there can be an intention connected with every detail of the behavior which means a still greater accumulation of good actions.

If you're thinking that doing a prostration is a positive action, then doing the prostration is a good action. But it's only one good action. But if with every positive intention one puts one's hands just in the right way without making any mistake, and one has a further mindfulness to bend oneself or curve the back at just the right moment in just the right way, then it's still another right intention. So you sharpen and charge your attention and your positive intention ever more. For this reason a single prostration is considered the accumulation of many good actions.

And this is one example of a kind of usage which has

been, which has developed and of which there are literally hundreds of cases. But if somebody says "Can you realize yourself totally just doing prostrations?" nobody would say "Yes." Through prostrations one can diminish obstacles, and to some degree develop one's clarity.

But as soon as you develop a minimum of clarity, you understand that you have to follow the path of wisdom. And following the path of wisdom means that one has to go beyond the mind, and instead find oneself in the state of the nature of the mind.

When we talk about finding oneself beyond our normal and natural limitations, we also mean beyond our cultures. And culture serves simply to help you understand that necessity. If we have to understand clearly and well what is the nature of the mirror, there's no way to understand the nature of that mirror unless you can see a reflection. But the reflection is not that which we have to discover.

But what we have to discover and understand, we can discover and understand only through and with the reflections. In this sense culture is a means, an instrument, for understanding what the teaching is. And since no individual exists who doesn't have his culture, one has much more likelihood of really grasping the sense and meaning of the teaching through one's own culture.

But we've already said other times, knowing well how to understand through one's own culture does not mean changing or transforming the principles of the teaching. We all must understand clearly when we talk of the principle of the teaching, we mean the principle of knowledge of contemplation through contemplation. One finds oneself in this state. One arrives at and deepens one's knowledge of the state through transmission.

If one is to follow a transmission, that means that the teaching has its principle. If you don't present the principles of the teaching, such as what is the path, what is the base, what is the fruit, what is the path itself that has to be taken, it's no longer a teaching. If I say "We observe ourselves and we discover ourselves, how we are, and what are our limitations" without going on to speak in any way of the principles of the path, yes it's true one can discover what is our condition and situation. One discovers that one is in a situation which you can liken to a bird in a cage.

But you've not resolved anything. You've gotten nowhere unless you also present a way to transcend this cage, to come out of the cage, to learn a method for freeing yourself. So it's very important that the teaching be understood through the individual's culture. And it's indispensable that the teaching not be modified or changed so that it loses its real nature, by adapting to the culture.

But moreover if one understands the real meaning of the teaching, there's nothing that needs to be changed or transformed. Because the teaching is given for people in different situations and conditions for different reasons. Take a teaching like the Kriyatantra. Kriyatantra is said to be appropriate for, characteristic of, persons like Brahmins. If we're talking about a person who feels disgust for what's worldly, and wants to just flee from the world, such a person

union of all masters

would do well to, could perfectly well, follow the Vinaya by becoming a monk.

There are many different types of teaching and the motive for that is this, that they're suited to different kinds and conditions of persons. There are people who are so boxed into a single way of seeing, that they assume that that's binding for everyone. This is characteristic of genuinely a low level. Because one doesn't want to see how others are, that others exist. One doesn't want to see anything that's other and that's different, and one wants to remain within the limitations of a given way, and force everyone else to come within those limitations.

So one must not in any way limit oneself. On the contrary be aware that there are extremely many and various different kinds and conditions and limitations of person. In particular when we speak of the Dzogchen teaching, we say it's a teaching of the state of the mind of Samantabhadra. What that means is that there's nothing to be done externally. And that the teaching doesn't ask of you to change any externals. So one has to understand, assimilate, understand how to use the teaching entirely within one's own methods, within one's own culture. And this is what's meant by saying "utilizing your own culture."

I've not said that all kinds of teaching correspond to this, that all categories of teaching can be understood at this level. But when a person is not limited, when a person is open, this possibility always exists.

Another demand which is made, another question was asked, to give a transmission of this red book. Many of you have had this and don't need it. But I do it for those for whom it serves. I'll explain afterwards for those who don't understand what's meant by a transmission of sound. In any case for right now I read. You listen. And that's all. For those of you who don't know how to pronounce it, listen and you might pick up some tips on pronunciation. I'll read the last one, the longest one, which is on page 27, because it includes all the rest of it. [recitation].

Now I'll explain another thing. No one asked me but I'll explain. ... [tape gap] ... Now what's on page three, the second practice called shintu tromay, and I'll explain how you do this practice that's very much without form.

There's an initial AH. I drew a slightly odd AH. It's an AH with a kind of point above. It's a very formal AH. You visualize an AH. From this three pointed AH there arise as you sound the AH, the three roots, principally the Guru, Padmasambhava usually. Or if you prefer you can visualize Vajrasattva, or if it's Samantabhadra who shows up that's fine too. Or what might emerge is the image of master Garab Dorje, the first human master of Dzogchen. We have him on page 25. In any case, you're mindful. You're aware that that image represents the union of all the masters.

So you now have him, and surrounded by all the gurus, devas and dakinis. And you begin to sound OM AH HUM. As you sound this OM AH and HUM, you visualize in the three locations on the image you have before you, appearing each of them in a thigle, the white OM, the red AH, the blue HUM. It's just like what we do later if we do the longer Guruyoga. But here

guruyoga

there's no stylization of words and complex visualization.

Then you sound the second OM AH HUM. And with that you establish the linkage, that is, the three rays of light descend from those locations. And immediately as that's happening, you visualize that in your corresponding three locations there's an OM AH and HUM which are receiving those rays.

We've not said that you visualize yourself in any transformation. However if your idea has been to visualize that union of all the masters in a Dharmakaya form like Samantabhadra, then it's appropriate to visualize yourself as from the start Vajrasattva. That's a system that's very much used in the Semde teaching of Dzogchen. But for the rest, if you just take the initiation as you are that's fine too. And that taking happens on the second OM AH HUM.

Then on the third OM AH HUM as you sound it you accomplish the unification. All that you visualize, all of the three roots that you visualize, vanish into, or are absorbed into, the three letters. The three letters in turn vanish through the rays of light into your three locations. And in that case as we do in general in practice, with the awareness of the OM AH and HUM, you can do something like the breathing, the recitation of the vajra.

This is a type of practice with Guruyoga that's very important in the Upadesha. Here's a practice that's very important in the Upadesha. You can visualize as that master who's before and above you disappears and the light descends. You can imagine that disappearing into a pyramid shape at the forehead which is in turn linked to the central channel. It's like a pyramidal exit or opening of the central channel. It's linked to the central channel and in that pyramid is a ganshi (dga'-dkyil) which turns counterclockwise.

For those of you who have a melong, on the back of it is a design of this pyramidal form with the ganshi within it, and it can turn. This drawing is not a drawing that's there by happenstance or merely as decoration. Underneath there's a consideration that's useful for practice. And there's the awareness of an AH at the center of the ganshi. As it turns and keeping that awareness, being mindful of that, is useful for the development of clarity. This is something you can do.

Above all for a person who doesn't have much mindfulness, much awareness or much clarity or who has a tendency to be slightly drowsy and befogged, this practice can be very very important. Or after the disappearance into the three locations there can appear again a white AH at the center of the body. And through the presence of that white AH, relaxing from concentration, one can pass into contemplation. This white AH can be, represent, the state of unification forever. One can keep it as a presence. And this is an indication that our state be found in the presence, in the awareness, of this transmission. Now that's finished.

[Here's an address book for those who want to leave an address so there can be continuing communication with Rinpoche. List yourself alphabetically by first name, not by family name. Our tradition.]

I also want to say outside of teaching, those of you who live in America in general, and those of you in particular who

collaboration, secondary causes

live in these parts of California, I think that people who have a common interest, something in common, do well to have some communication. If one is genuinely interested in the Dzogchen teaching, that means that such people have a lot of things in common. It's not just that they have in common having received some teaching together, and having done some practice together. But rather this is practice that they're going to continue with until final realization. So they have something in common until the very very end.

So it's not as if we'd all been on a picnic together, met a few people for a few days, and that's over. So in this case to meet together, to collaborate with one another, to have contact and do something together, seems to me very important.

As you may have understood, I'm not a person who is very much given to organizations and institutions and the like. That doesn't please me very much. But that people live in the spirit of the teaching, yes, that pleases me. And it pleases me very much to cooperate and collaborate with people.

For me, collaborating among people does not mean organizing or creating some kind of bureaucratic tangle. Because I'm convinced that the teaching must in some way be integrated, brought, into our normal human and social condition. And our social condition is super organized and over-organized everywhere and in all countries. So you're not going to resolve anything adding one more organization or doing some organizing. What's lacking is not organization of which there's an abundance, but consciousness, the consciousness of each individual.

So every individual interested in the teaching, mindful of this, has to participate and collaborate a bit. There surely must be a way, even if it's not strictly organized. I don't know what precisely would be the way here. But according to the Dzogchen teaching, secondary causes will always present themselves. It's best that man not project into the future too much. But rather when secondary causes appear that they be met with clarity. I think that the way for a person to live and work is exactly that.

So if people are interested and find a way to collaborate, many many things can actually get done. As now in Italy for example where I've lived for many many years, one could say I have more people with whom I'm in contact and I've been in contact. You could call them my disciples, my students. In Italy that's a larger group, more numerous than in other places. That's quite sure.

But we've never succeeded in doing some extraordinary thing the way others seem to do. Because I'm the type of person who's really afraid of organization and bureaucracy. It's not that I'm frightened that something will happen, and people will disturb me or bother me. If I've got to do something of a political current, I've no fear of being attacked or criticized.

But I'm afraid for the teaching. If what's done in the name of the teaching, and how the teaching is shown, doesn't correspond to the teaching, that's trouble. The teaching is considered by many as the path for the individual and the path for the future. If we leave some mistaken imprints, a mistaken trace, as part of our history, they'll follow our

center, land

error in the future. They'll develop and cultivate and expand our error and that will be the future.

If somebody has some kind of personal lunacy, that's of no consequence. But if the lunacy passes itself off as representing the teaching, then that has serious consequences. For this reason I'm very very much afraid in general. Before making any move, I think very carefully whether it corresponds to the real principles, spirit, of the teaching or not.

About 7, 8 years ago in Naples very near the university, we found a very nice big house. We wanted to have a center which would have many different activities, and in particular would be a place for doing yantra. And we planned not only that there would be a gymnasium for yantra yoga, but in each room what kind of activity would be carried out. So we had 7 or 8 different activities in program. And we decided to take this house and we went to the proprietor, the owner of the house, the landlord, and payed it. And we were all very happy.

That evening, that night, I was back home and I couldn't sleep. I thought to myself "Now what's going on here? What's to be done? What's happening?" And so thinking about it, I realized what we were about to do is create something that's very far from the teaching and has nothing to do with the teaching.

The next day I was supposed to go sign the lease for this house. I called together all the people of the community. I said "We're not going ahead with it." They said "What are you saying? We've already paid. It's all done. It's all established." I said "Well we'll ask him to give back the money. And if he does fine, and if not, all we've lost is a little money. Whereas if we were to go ahead with an error, that would be serious."

Nobody understood what I was saying, because they were all now fixated on having a beautiful center. But I know what gets born from having a center. I know what consequences come after the center. So we decided "No center". After that it's become a kind of lesson, and thanks to that we've never succeeded in putting together a center.

But in fact there are constantly more and more people. Now if we go to Italy, wherever we go we find people. Wherever we hold a retreat, there will be hundreds of people. What we have had every so often is a gymnasium for yantra. But when we have a gymnasium, we call it the gymnasium of the Dzogchen Community. But where is this community? It seems like a fantasy because that's the gymnasium of the community, but where's the community?

But it's not a mistake. That's actually very accurate. In some way to carry on activities, you may need some kind of base, some kind of toehold. So we said "Let's not have a center in the city. But let's try to find a place. We'll find a piece of land, maybe with some houses on it. That can be a place where we can get together." In Italy now there are different cities and different towns, and from all those different cities and towns, when it's a question of doing a retreat, there's a place where they can come together. There's also a possibility there, or will be, of working for those who don't have work to do. And there maybe will be a

centers, retreat
possibility there of producing something.

But the principle is not making a center, the way they do. They make a kind of hotel where people go to live. When there are ten or twenty people who are organized, they present themselves like the owners. People come and pay, and it's like a restaurant or a hotel. That's normally what they mean by a center. And then they carry on some kind of activity. They invite people to come there and they get some income, and with the money that they earn from that, they live and they manage to keep the center going. This is usually the way in which centers are run.

The idea of what we want to do isn't that. It's rather a place where anyone can come who's interested in the teachings from wherever, and the notion is to give these people a possibility. We know that there are many people who have no money who are interested in the teachings. But a person who has no money, who has to come to a retreat like this, how does he manage it? I never say "Don't come because I won't give you the teachings."

I'm always ready to give the teachings, also to people who don't have money. But those people may be obliged not to come by lack of money. So we develop a class system in the teaching. It's not that we've created a class system, but the class system has sprung up. So the notion is that, for example, for people who have nothing, there will be the possibility for them to work and participate and live.

Then there are people who live in the city. They may think and feel "I feel part of the Dzogchen Community." Because the Dzogchen Community doesn't mean that you've signed up and you've got your card and you're like a member of a political party. It means someone who is interested in the teachings and finds himself in this spirit. And of such people, many live in the city and have work.

Certainly it isn't that you just say "Oh, if it's of the Community, I'm going to live there" and you set off to live there. But rather that everybody will have the possibility of coming there, for example to do a retreat, not just speaking of collective retreats, teaching retreats like this one, but when you want to do a personal, private retreat.

A person who's learned well how to do contemplation, at a certain moment will want to apply this, train themselves, and in a retreat. And there are many types of practice that require silence, isolation, so that they can be done correctly, above all when you go ahead to do a practice for example like thogay. Or there's a type of practice that can be done if one wants to before beginning thogay. It's a type of retreat that's done in the dark. And then afterward, after one has begun the practice of thogay, there's another type of retreat in the dark that one does.

For somebody that lives in the city and knows the teaching, the possibility of doing this is just a dream. For all these types of practice, if there's such a place, then there exists a real possibility for even those who live in the city to go there and do it. So this is my idea, that those who live in the city and other towns and in the country can all participate in this kind of situation. And if everybody takes their appropriate degree of responsibility for this,

Merigar, Conway

this becomes something living.

But it's also a question of, as the times ripen, as the secondary causes present themselves, this kind of situation progresses. So at least in Italy it's this kind of situation that I've tried to create. Because as I've said, I've always lived in Italy for many years. So we now have a piece of land there called "Merigar". And this year we did a retreat there before coming here. And this is the principle in the program that we hope to carry out there.

Somebody who lives here may think "Now what interest is that to me? Italy is so far away." But distances on this earth are not ever very great today. Anybody can get anywhere. And then also it is important that one doesn't remain stuck in one's limitations of a certain country, a certain situation. If you think "I go to Italy. I arrive in the airport, and I don't even know a word of the language. What am I going to do?"

That's the principle for which reason one needs such a place as I'm speaking of. You know where you're going. And you know that when you get there, there'll be a possibility of living. And it's not that you've arrived in a hotel or restaurant that's unknown to you, but rather you've arrived in a place that in some sense is your home. And the people there have interests that are the same as yours and know how to proceed with that. This is the idea we've begun in one place and we now have the idea of beginning elsewhere.

I continue always to say right now "I work in Italy. I teach at the university there. But there's absolutely no reason to think that I'm established there, nailed to one place." I'm now working to create this place in Italy, Merigar, in order to define clearly, to demonstrate, how such a place can and should be. If number one is wrong, you can be sure that all the rest of the calculations will be wrong. So it's very important that right from the start, that not be done mistakenly.

Once that is done right and it corresponds to the idea, and it is as it should be, then I can go anywhere. When I arrived this time in Conway where some of you live, their community has a house. There's a bit of land and there are a lot of people. I said I'll come there again. It's not that I'll go there for a day or two. When there'll be time, I'll go there for some months at a time. And not just to go there to conduct a seminar or a course, but I'll go there to do something actively.

But it's not just that I'll go only to Conway. I can go other places in other countries. This notion of exchange, of going places, different places, and people from the different places going to others to do something valuable, to make a real contribution and participate, this is an idea that we should all be conscious of, because I think it really has a meaning for us.

When one first puts forth such an idea, it seems a complete fantasy. But time continues on. It goes on for centuries and centuries. We'll all be finished in a few years. Some of you young people perhaps will continue a little longer. But after a hundred years everybody here will not be here. But our ideas and actions, if we've done

collaboration

something right, can contribute and can continue to contribute for centuries. And this is the way in which the teaching proceeds. It's very important that we collaborate and cooperate in this regard.

So I'm now speaking above all to those of you, yes, to those of you who are here, but above all to those of you who live in this area of California. You know each other. Among yourselves you can cooperate. You can collaborate and do something real and living, together. I'm not talking about constructing a solid, strong Dzogchen Community, that is to say, some kind of organization. That's not what we're saying. I wanted to say this outside the moment of teaching. Done.

attitude, compassion

[Sat. morning, 31-Jul-82]

We've arrived today at the last day of teaching. And I'll explain a bit about attitude and behavior, and also about what's meant by realization. We've spoken a good deal about the path, and about the way of seeing, and the way of practicing, which are elements of the path. When one succeeds in taking this practice into what we call the great contemplation, into contemplation which isn't caught in limits of time, in that case there's no need to explain much about attitude or behavior.

But until one arrives at that condition, attitude or behavior is one of the principal concerns. If one enters into contemplation, before the beginning and after the end of that, there's a time limit on it. There's our behavior, and our attitude. Our existence as body, voice and mind is all linked with our attitude and behavior. So on this point, one has to very knowledgeable and aware.

When we follow a Buddhist teaching like that of the Mahayana Sutras, the masters explain to us the so-called four awarenesses, and they link this also with this famous theme of Bodhicitta, or compassion. And all teachings elaborate upon and give great emphasis to compassion in one way or another. And many people say or think that this Norbu never talks about compassion. "How come he never mentions compassion?"

When I last went to do a retreat in England, there was an English monk and nun there, and their comment was that Norbu's teaching lacks compassion. Because they're very accustomed to hearing masters who first of all bring forth the theme compassion. But I've followed that method and that way of presentation of teaching, and that kind of comment for years and years. If I have to explain those themes in that way, I can do so for days and days on end.

But in the Dzogchen teaching, it's considered that compassion must arise from knowing oneself truly. If one constructs compassion, or feels compassion in the interests of something, or one builds up a sort of artificial compassion, that leaves no room for a real and true compassion. And a true compassion will never arise. So true compassion arises from what we refer to in the verses, dagdang thayay semchan kun, (bdag-dang mtha'-yas sems-can-kun), that is, the commitment to deeply knowing oneself, and knowing what one's nature is. And this is what produces a true compassion.

If I'm conscious of knowing what my real condition is as essence, nature, and energy, I know too that my knowledge, that knowledge, must develop and deepen. Through deepening and development of that knowledge, I'm on the path that leads to realization. But I'm conscious that there are thousands and millions of beings who don't have this knowledge, numberless beings who want to be happy, or want to be content, but have no idea where happiness or contentment could come from.

For example, not knowing the principle of dualism, not knowing this, not understanding it, they make of their lives a kind of struggle. Through struggling through any of the many kinds of combat and struggling, one simply intensifies the dualism of the situation. When one knows about this condition, then one finally is in a position to transcend it,

compassion, attitude

to go beyond the dualistic situation. But there are so many beings who don't know and who have no way of understanding.

If I'm truly conscious of this, there's no way to remain indifferent, uncaring, in the face of a being who's suffering and transmigrating. So compassion needs to be understood in this way. It's something serious and represents a real intention to collaborate, to cooperate, to help the other. If you want to help someone, you've got to have at least a minimum of capacity. If we're talking about a teaching, you have to have real knowledge of it and experience. If somebody says to you "Teach me how to do breathing" for example, that's easy because the way of breathing is like a technique that one can apply. So many things are programmed and involve just following a technique, and that's easy to communicate.

But to enter into a real knowledge and realize it, that can't be a question of a program. One has to come out of, and go beyond, any and every type of program. This is what's meant by entering into, and finding oneself in, real knowledge. If one really wants to teach, one has to have this experience. So first of all one has to learn well, enter into, and find oneself existing in this knowledge.

In the Upadesha teachings of Dzogchen there's a Tantra which explains in detail the attitude and behavior that a person should have towards the teaching. At the beginning it says one has the attitude of a bee. A bee goes hunting among all the flowers wherever it may find its nutriment. Then the next is the attitude of a herbivorous animal like a deer for example. That is, when they have grass to eat, they always seek a quiet place to rest and digest. The next stage is the attitude of the madman, a person who doesn't stay within normal limits of himself. And then there's another attitude which is described as that of the lion who fears no one and nothing.

So in short without remembering all the details, there's a series of attitudes which are described as attitudes which people have in regard to the teaching. Many people imagine that this description indicates a set of stages like a gradual path that has to be followed one by one. But that's not the concept. Rather the real meaning is that when it's a matter of understanding oneself, one has to be like a bee. One has to be willing to go any and everywhere to pick up knowledge, to learn what one must.

But that doesn't mean that one continues to behave like a bee all of one's life, and that at the time of death, you're still hunting everywhere for some knowledge. When one finds knowledge, then one becomes like the herbivorous animal. One finds a quiet place to practice, to digest and assimilate, to assimilate that knowledge in a more real way. But that doesn't mean that one has to be always within a cave closed up and isolated. For the time that's necessary, for the period that's useful.

Because then comes the attitude and behavior of the madman. And the madman obviously doesn't stay locked up in a cave. This means not letting oneself be conditioned by anything, limited by anything. In short the ideas are very clear and very understandable in these examples or images. So it's very important that one find oneself in and possess

collaboration, advertising knowledge, particularly if one is to teach.

Someone may say "But who authorizes you to teach?" And this is genuinely a ridiculous thought. But once again here is a thought that arises from our social situation, the example of social reality, with all of its limitations, ranks and grades. When a master teaches you, he authorizes you to teach. There's never been a teaching which said "Now I authorize you only to practice. You come back for a second degree or title, and I'll authorize you to teach." What the master teaches to the disciple is to be conscious and aware.

But when a person has his capacity and his knowledge, and then has the impulse to communicate knowledge which he actually possesses to others, he teaches. To communicate teaching is not an activity in the sense of a work. You have to understand that the teaching is not a business or a profession. You can do any kind of business or profession in your life to earn your living. And a business or work in which you produce something and thereby gain income, money.

But the principle of the teaching is linked to our spirit, to the spirit of each individual. It's a matter of cooperating, participating, with good will. We can collaborate and participate with any and every individual. And one has to understand also that teaching comes about in this same way. It's not that I go to a master, obtain preparation and thereby a diploma. And now that I have the diploma, I'm entitled to advertise myself, and do advertising for students and disciples to come to me. If someone proceeds in this way, he obviously is a fake. That's not the principle.

The principle is rather that when one possesses knowledge, since we're always in contact with people, sooner or later people become aware that one has this knowledge, or people begin to pose questions, ask for communication, discover that one has something to give, and request it.

We always use the example of gold. Gold, which really possesses the quality of gold, which is true gold, is always sought after. Even if the gold is deep deep in the earth, in some way people are going to find out that it's there and dig for it. There's a Tibetan proverb. The Tibetan proverb is "Though the gold may be way beneath the earth, its radiance shines forth above the surface." When there's a real value, in some way its light issues forth.

When there's no value there, then you need lots of support, lots of publicity and advertising. If there's some piece of lead or tin, or some alloy that's mostly tin, and lead, and there's a little bit of gold, to sell this, say a piece of brass with a little bit of gold, there to convince people that it's gold, you really need an advertising campaign. Then you have to put a very handsome sign. Then you need to explain that this is really a very special gold of super quality, or something of the kind.

Then you explain all the generations, the whole lineage of the gold, where it's come from, and so forth. This is, you know, to really convince people, in short, to sell. What it means is that there's something fishy at bottom. If there's really value, there's absolutely no need whatsoever for that

responsibility, indoctrination

kind of publicity. So there's no need at all, to teach, to have a title or some kind of diploma or authorization.

In modern society it's different. If somebody wants to teach yantra yoga in a public school, they need a diploma. But we understand that. We know just what's involved. That's a completely other issue. But the teaching, we've already said this, must not be confused and blurred with the images and appearances of society. Rather it has to be understood that the teaching is the responsibility of every person who's interested in it and who cares for it. Thus the person, the human being, must find himself or herself, truly in the spirit of the teaching. And therefore the teaching is something you can communicate to those people who are genuinely interested.

I for example was many many years in Italy without ever saying a word about any of this. I had no motivation to hide the teaching, or that I wanted to keep it secret. Nor on the contrary in recent times when I've begun to teach, have I had somebody's authorization to teach. But simply at a certain point, people began to ask me about the teaching. Before that they hadn't. And from then I began this contact which involves teaching.

An English Tibetologist came to Italy years ago, and spent more than six months in my house. And we were great friends. About four years later, I went to London for the first time there to teach Dzogchen. And he came to the teaching. He was very surprised. He said "But how come you never said a word about all this during the whole time that we were together." I said "You never asked." It's not my responsibility to condition or indoctrinate him. When we were together during those six months, several times he asked me about Tibetan grammar and language, and I gave him all the help possible, explaining at great lengths.

And on another occasion he asked me about the analysis of the dhatu, a set of metaphysical considerations that exist in the Khayjug (mkhas-'jug), a text of Mipham. I worked with him on that for four or five days. I taught him about that until he really deeply understood it. But that has nothing whatsoever to do with the Dzogchen teaching. It's also an intellectual study.

It's hardly for me to say "I know about the Dzogchen teaching. How come you're not interested in that." Nor is it that he was ignorant of the Dzogchen teaching. He told me a lot about Dzogchen. Because he'd received much teaching of the Longchen Nyingthig from Dingo Khentse Rinpoche. ... [tape gap] ... And every morning he did the practice of the ngondro of the Longchen Nyingthig. And it wasn't for me to say "Hey I know about that too." So it simply isn't appropriate to intervene, to interfere, and condition people.

So in short it's not that one sets out at all costs to teach something. Today, at this period for example, I'm explaining the teaching to you. But time passes, and time recedes into history. Since ??, we've many times done retreats and practice in many different countries. Those that have already been done are now merely history. And the one we're doing right now is about to be history.

At a certain point in time, the teachings and explanations of Norbu will be history. There's no reason to

knowledge, compassion

think that somebody's going to go on, or that anybody's going to go on, teaching as Norbu does. I have no guarantee that there will be anyone who will be teaching in Norbu's way, and no guarantee that there will be any Tibetans, for example, that there are any Tibetan teachers, who are or will teach in this fashion.

The point here is not that I'm special, that I'm so extra good. But it's a way of seeing, a way of understanding and explaining, a way of framing or putting the teaching, that's a bit different from other ways and other people's ways. Certainly in some tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow, in some future, you can be quite sure that many will seek this way of understanding, this way of teaching, this way of practicing. They'll try to find it again.

Many of you who've had some of this contact, some of this practice, some of this teaching, will be teaching many many times. This is the truth. The future will be like this for us. So it has nothing to do with plans or programs, with being authorized, or not being authorized. Rather it means that one has to first of all be quite sure, quite conscious, that he really knows what it is he's got to teach. So before teaching, one has to find oneself in knowledge. When one finds oneself and lives in that knowledge, then the way of teaching is rather simple.

There's a Tibetan proverb. If you communicate with this finger, there has to be an answer with this thumb. If somebody puts out their forefinger, you have to respond with that finger. If you respond to the forefinger with the thumb, it's not harmonious. This is also how you teach. This is the way the teaching is given. You can't project or program what the stimulus ???. You have to see where you are, what the circumstances are, with what kind of people you find yourself, and what's the situation or condition of those people, what they know. If you want to teach, you've got to make contact with, and enter into, the dimension of those individuals. You have to search for and find the culture of that person, of those people. Then you can succeed in communicating something.

But first of all you don't fixate on communicating a teaching. Rather first of all, you have to find yourself in knowledge. Then you'll understand what really is meant by compassion. For compassion it's not sufficient to just use the word or to give certain forms to your thoughts. Rather you have to enter into real knowledge of your condition and situation, and therefore understand the corresponding condition and situation of others. In short everything corresponds to this.

In short, our intention, and our consciousness, and our presence of consciousness, our awareness in the moment, is what governs everything. There's a saying of the Buddha "All existence is secondary causes. So everything depends on one's intention." Secondary causes means all of the situation, circumstances, details, that are linked to our intention. If the secondary causes are present, the human being must be aware of them, must be open, conscious, alert, to their arising.

So this principle of open attention, of alertness, is

crucial, is a key, to attitude or behavior in Dzogchen. In Dzogchen, there's no rules to learn. There's no principle to learn about how you must be, how you should live, how you ought to behave. People ask me "If you practice Dzogchen, can you drink wine?" Somebody who likes to smoke very much "If I practice Dzogchen, can I keep smoking?"

The Dzogchen teaching is too simple a teaching for all these people. It attracts them apparently very much. It says "Sure, come and you can smoke all you want. You can drink all you want." Because the Dzogchen teaching, you can be quite sure, never says "Don't smoke. Don't drink." So there's no rule to learn. But it doesn't say on the other hand "Smoke. Smoke. It'll do you good." It doesn't say "Learn to drink. Drink more."

Some people say that they're breaking out of their limitations by drinking. They say "You're conditioned. Come here and have a drink." And some poor wretch who's drunk all of his life, and never succeeds in coming out of this, goes to a master, and he asks "Master, what can I do?" And the master says "You want to follow my teaching?" And the man says "Certainly master, I want to follow all that you say." And the master puts something on his head, using some kind of an initiation, and authenticates it with mantra, and says "From this moment you will not drink. If you drink from now on, you're going to have real trouble with the guardians."

Maybe he even did say something to the guardians. This person first of all has much affection and much respect for the master and for the teaching. And so he's managed to overcome drinking. And so for a year, for more than a year, he's managed to get by without a drop. And he became almost normal. Then shows up a special master, one who drinks like a fish, and says "Why don't you drink? Have a drink." He says "Well, I don't drink." "Oh, you don't know how to drink?" "I know how to drink, but I don't drink." He says "If you don't know how to drink, start learning. And if you know how to drink, break through your limits." And obliges that poor wretch to drink. And this poor person, out of respect for the master, began to drink. And he's right back in his dimension as a drunk. This is a true story. This actually happened. There are types who behave like that.

But the Dzogchen teaching doesn't ask you to drink, and it doesn't tell you not to drink. But the Dzogchen teaching teaches that you're an individual, a human being, and you have a material body, its energy, and the mind. So even if right now, you find yourself in a moment of contemplation, your body is material. Your ideas may transcend your limitations, but your body is still living in material limitations. And one has to know this, and one has to have it present in immediate awareness.

If one knows what one's limits are, if one knows one's real and concrete condition or situation, and if one knows how deal with one's needs to get ahead, to move forward, this we can call awareness or consciousness. If somebody succeeds in drinking, let's say, ten bottles of whiskey, without making drunk neither body, voice and energy, nor mind, then that means he has that capacity. He's gone beyond that physical limitation.

responsibilities, rules

And somebody says to you "I've had ten bottles of wine. My mind is still limpid and clear", that doesn't mean an awful lot. It doesn't mean much, because an individual isn't just a mind, but also is a body and an energy. It's much ?? that that person knows that his body is there, behind him, with him, at all times.

So in the Dzogchen teaching, what you above all have to learn is this awareness of how you exist. When we're minimally capable of reintegrating and integrating, then there really is a way of transcending our material condition and limitations. Then it's no longer something unknown, mysterious, to the individual himself. Here the whole issue is a different one. But until you get to that point, you have to have a constant awareness of our material physical situation. It's not necessary that a rule be taught, but one must regulate oneself, govern oneself, with an awareness and a consciousness of one's condition.

You have to understand that the Dzogchen teaching means taking responsibility on yourself. It's not giving a rule, because following a rule and taking full responsibility for yourself, are two quite different things. If you give a rule that imposes five things that have to be done, if one encounters something that doesn't enter within those rules, a sixth thing, one keeps on applying the rule.

We can see an example in Buddhist tradition. There are many monks who follow the Vinaya in the Theravada style and smoke. They smoke cigarettes one after the other as if it was nothing. Because perhaps in the time of the Buddha, there wasn't this usage. People didn't smoke. And the Buddha named liquor, alcohol. "Don't drink." And the most that he clarified was the issue of intoxication. And that meant one makes oneself drunk with something.

Obviously with a cigarette nobody gets drunk and faints in the street. So this idea can't fit precisely. So if a monk smokes cigarettes, nobody can say anything. Because there's no rule in the Vinaya which simply says "Don't smoke cigarettes." So simply, one's rules bind you to obey only what the rules specifically ??. As we go on into modern times, many strange things happen, and strange usages arise. But they're not referred to in the rules. So somebody who's applying the rules strictly speaking, can't be criticized in any way. Nobody can say anything to them.

What this means is that rules are always tied to a given time, a given place, a given set of customs and habits or people. So knowing this, the Dzogchen teaching puts the person, the individual person, at the center. And that person has to be aware of, and know how to deal with, whatever arises. So the individual must assume responsibility for itself. When one takes one's responsibilities in hand, then one starts saying "Well OK, what do I do? What's good? What's bad?" Do you always have to go back and ask the master? There's not always a master at hand to ask. How are you going to do it? Are you going to look it up in the book? What if there's no book?

Taking responsibility doesn't mean asking the master or looking it up in the book, the manual. It means meeting situations, dealing with things, doing your best. Doing your

doing one's best, helping oneself
 best doesn't always correspond to considerations of right and wrong, good and evil. It may involve ?? oneself to the development of greater clarity.

For example we see Sakya Pandit said using the example of a bird. He writes that in India, near Assam, there exists a species of bird. And this kind of bird is very loving towards its children. And therefore the little birds, the offspring, have great love for their mother. But then when the little birds become big, when the offspring mature, they don't always remain with the mother. When the little birds become capable of flying, they say "So long mama", and off they go.

And the mother worries "Oh my children. Who knows what's befallen them, where they've gone to." But the children find something more interesting than mama. And this is nature. This is natural. That's how the mama herself began. Maybe she's forgotten it. But that's how it was for her too once upon a time.

In this particular case, the birds, so grateful to their mother and loving their mother, wanted to do something special for her to repay her for all her love and kindness. And these particular species of birds, they think and they try to do their very best, just like us when we say "let's do our best."

They started to pull out all her feathers. They didn't know anything better to do. They loved her so much, and the ones who loved her most of all were the ones who pulled out the most feathers. Well the poor mother bird remained naked without feathers. All cheerful thinking that they'd done the right thing, they all said "Bye mama" and flew off. And many times when this happens to this species of bird, the mother dies, because she's no longer capable of flying without feathers.

Sakya Pandit says that this is a very interesting example. We're just like that. Very often we think we're doing the best possible thing, and in fact it doesn't correspond at all. But even if this doesn't correspond, if it's not right, we don't have any other way to be. If you want to find something better than that poor best we're doing, you have to develop your clarity. And this development of clarity takes time, and comes through practice. For which reason, while we're developing our clarity, until we know better, we do our best. And this is what we call, and how we apply, our consciousness.

This is not true only in dealing with others, or in doing something for others. The question of doing one's best is above all a question of helping oneself. Because sometimes people get so involved in doing something for the benefit of others, that they forget that they themselves exist. And so they construct something which in the end is completely false. So it's important, knowing ... [tape gap] ... statement of the Buddha that one should take an example for oneself, and not disturb other people. It means that one finds oneself in, lives in, a concrete experience. And this is the fundamental of how our consciousness and awareness arises.

And too, our consciousness must never be lost through distraction. Sometimes a persons possesses consciousness, is knowledgeable, but this consciousness is governed by

distraction, realization

distraction. Somebody says "You mustn't do that. That's the wrong thing to do." Sometimes we answer "Yea, I know that. I do know better." Then why do I do it? Because I'm distracted. Distraction doesn't mean always just absent-mindedness. I go somewhere. I forgot something.

Distraction can also be my way of letting myself be conditioned by something. One knows perfectly well that one has to govern oneself, and having that knowledge, having that principle present in mind, nonetheless lets oneself be conditioned by somebody else. This itself is distraction, letting oneself be distracted by this passion, this emotional connection. So you mustn't think that distraction is only forgetfulness or absent-mindedness.

When you don't have immediate presence of your consciousness, right there at hand, then distraction can take over in any one of many ways. Even if you're extremely conscious about this, actions committed through distraction make your knowledgeableness or your consciousness worthless. And this is what we refer to in the Dzogchen teaching as attitude, the attitude or behavior above all of being knowledgeable about everything, but also having this knowledge or consciousness present immediately in the here and now, not letting oneself be distracted.

Life is regulated through our consciousness, governed by our consciousness. And above all we put this in connection with our immediate presence, that is, the secondary causes and circumstances right here and now. And this condition, this situation, we can better through practice which deepens and develops our clarity. Slowly through the development of clarity on the one hand, and the development of immediate presence and self-awareness on the other, we can link our consciousness on the one hand, our self-awareness, with our contemplation.

Yesterday we spoke a great deal about how to practice self-liberation in living. That means that one is present fully and immediately aware in the state of contemplation. When one doesn't have that capacity for immediacy, it's important to not let yourself be distracted. When you're not distracted, then self-awareness arises. And when you're aware, everything goes better. And this is about that part of the path which we call attitude or behavior.

Then we have, after the path, we have the fruit, which is realization. Right from the start in the teaching we talk about the base, the path or the way, and the fruit. Fruit is always explained in terms of the three bodies, Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya. And kaya means body, and body is here understood as meaning dimension.

These are usually represented or emblemized, as human figures. They are human figures because those are symbols for human beings. Because for us, it's easier to understand things in our way. And that's how the teaching has been transmitted to us and how it has entered into our human culture and way of understanding.

When we spoke of the path of transformation, we said that the transformations happen in ways appropriate to the different beings to whom they present themselves. So in that case, if these three bodies have to be presented, they could

three bodies

be presented or depicted in many many different ways. That's perfectly possible.

In the Tantra of the Upadesha, the Dralthaljur, it's said that there are 13 phelwar ??, solar systems, in which the Dzogchen teaching is found. We don't know for each of these solar systems what types of beings may live there. We don't know if they have an image like ourselves. We don't know if they're all necessarily composed of material bodies like ourselves or not. How do they understand, or consider or depict the three bodies? How have these presented themselves for them? If we show them what is for us a picture of Samantabhadra, who knows if for them that's Samantabhadra or nothing at all.

This is why we say that really these are dimensions. It's just our idea that causes them to have for us the semblance of this image. When we say Nirmanakaya we mean a contact that in some sense is, the dimension becomes capable of contact that's material, that's represented materially. For example, the Nirmanakaya is represented by the historical Buddha, Buddha Shakyamuni. It's considered that the Buddha Shakyamuni is Buddha in this epoch who manifested himself materially and had contact with human beings.

But then it's also explained that there are the Buddhas of the six lokas. Since the six lokas are a situation, a condition, and a karmic vision which is different, they have a different way of manifesting. Similarly there may be many many other ways again of manifesting. Our concept of Buddha Shakyamuni in his epoch, that's a Buddhist idea. But that idea isn't definitive. That isn't the case for everybody or everything.

When we speak of the Nirmanakaya, we also know for example that Padmasambhava is considered a Nirmanakaya manifestation. Nirmanakaya manifestation is someone on the one hand, who has a capacity for direct and physical contact with human beings, with material beings, and on the other hand has communication with the Sambhogakaya and is capable of transmitting that communication to physical human beings.

One has to understand that even though this being has manifested at the Nirmanakaya level, he's also Sambhogakaya and Dharmakaya. It's not to be understood as something like a theater where there are three people who are putting on a kind of show. We get into sort of Buddhist ideas, above all, somebody who has a super-limited boxed Sutric way way of seeing things, and everything is always a manifestation of Buddha Shakyamuni.

For example if they were to speak of the Dzogchen teaching, they immediately begin to explain that Garab Dorje is really a manifestation of Buddha Shakyamuni. And they speak of the herukas, Khorlo Demchog, Hevajra, whatever, always understood as emanation of Buddha Shakyamuni, as if the Buddha of our time, the Buddha Shakyamuni, was doing some kind of theatrical show, changing costume and role all the time, and that all the Tantras and all the teachings had been derived through this kind of operation.

It's also perfectly possible that Buddha Shakyamuni manifested all of the Tantras and explained them. But if the Buddha Shakyamuni manifested as Hevajra, and we say that the

Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya

manifestation of Hevajra transmitted this teaching, then that means there was a manifestation of Hevajra, that Hevajra exists. What we have to understand is that the dimension of the Sambhogakaya is beyond our time and our limitation. And every realized individual finds himself in that dimension. Their state and the Dharmakaya are at the same level.

For which reason there's the statement that all illuminated beings are in the same condition. People who don't understand clearly think that that's saying not "are in the same condition" but rather "are all in one condition". Rather, that means that they are all in the same condition or same situation of Dharmakaya and Sambhogakaya, and then at the Nirmanakaya level they manifest differently.

The Nirmanakaya manifestations, we tend to explain in a way very familiar from the Sutras when we talk of the ten actions of the Buddha and the like. This too is a very Sutric conception. Because it's not said that Nirmanakaya manifestations must appear only on this earth. A Nirmanakaya manifestation can occur perfectly possibly at many different places within the universe. And a manifestation of another kind in another location might very well not have these ten Buddha characteristics. So one has to get out of the box of these conceptions.

Rather one must understand that the individual has his characteristic of essence, of nature, and the working of energy. And this energy, how it works, how it functions, its whole dimension and all its manifestations, this is the zone we speak of as the Nirmanakaya. First of all, what we speak of when we talk about realization, is the way to get to, manifest, find oneself in, the dimension we call Sambhogakaya. We speak of there being before the bardo of existence, the bardo of the Dharmata. Also in Dzogchen we say that it that moment of the lhundrub, of self-perfectedness, that's where the individual realizes himself, or, put differently, finds himself in the Sambhogakaya dimension.

When one realizes oneself in the Sambhogakaya dimension, that is, finds oneself there, it doesn't mean that everything stops. There continues always to be the working of his wisdom. Through his wisdom can come about the Nirmanakaya manifestation. And this helps us to understand that the diverse levels and kinds of manifestation of the Nirmanakaya level, have to do with the ways in which energy can work, that is, as tsal, as dang, as rolpa.

One has to understand very well what's meant by our existence as essence, nature and energy, and all of the implications of that to understand on the other hand, what is meant when we say that realization comes about in the three bodies, Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya. Otherwise we end up essentially doing the operation that's done at the Sutric level, where Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya are very much spoken of, and spoken of very beautifully, but seem to be qualities and characteristics of a Buddha.

We're not talking about something that one day arises, explodes anew, because one has come to Buddhahood. You have to remember always that in Dzogchen, that which is the base is the path, and that which is the path is the fruit. Otherwise it's not Dzogchen any more. It's not the Great Perfection.

thogay, body of light

So that means that realization, Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya, is not some strangeness that suddenly and brusquely comes about.

When we say that our existence as body, voice, and mind is in a situation that has come to be like ice, that means that what really is, isn't manifesting, but it's there. When this impediment, this obstacle, isn't there, then what manifests is that which is and has been. For example in the state of lhundrub, in the bardo of the Dharmata, there's not the material body. It's not there and functioning. Nor is our energy there, or at least not working as it now is doing, nor is the mind there working.

So if one has real experience, then in that moment one can recognize and realize. If one has applied this really in one's life, then one can develop the capacity to integrate also materiality. In particular in the Dzogchen thogay practice, we explain four levels, four levels that have to do with the way of advancing, the way of developing. The fourth of these levels is called "the consuming of existence". That is to say, the physical body is absorbed into the inner ying, inner nature, which appears externally, that one first of all lives initially in the development of vision, as if one's inner vision had become objectivity. Now this too all integrates into the inner ying.

For example a lamp which gives light, because if there's the lamp which gives light, there's also the object which is lit. And another person who is observing that, notices it. But if the light that's given, and the lamp, he who is looking, are all integrated, then he who looks is the light, and that which is lit. The condition is a bit different. For this we say that all of existence, all external considerations, are consumed at this stage.

When one finds oneself at this point in life and practice, if one dies, one manifests the body of light. The body of light means that at a certain point, material physical body disappears. It's said that the masters who don't leave a body, leave behind them their hair and nails, because the hair and nails, it is said, are impurities of the physical body. It seems that all of the body has entered into its substance, the substance of the elements, which is light, except for the impurities ... [tape gap] ... that if the individual manifested death, but when he arrives at the state of lhundrub, then at that point, there manifests all that capacity which he had acquired in life through practice, and thereupon reintegrates all of the material substance that he had left. So it's as if anew there arises the body of light.

This is a bit different concept than the concept of Nirmanakaya. The Nirmanakaya means that there's no limitation on emanation. It means that manifestations arise where there's cause according to the individual, in dependence upon the individual. For example we say the sun rises in the sky, and that the sun possesses infinite rays. The rays are the characteristics, the qualifications, of the sun as such.

Thus when individuals realize, the Sambhogakaya level streams forth with infinite wisdom, just like the rays of the sun. But the rays of the sun are received where that's possible. It doesn't just depend on the sun. The sun is not

body of light

limited to sending rays there rather than there. It sends rays everywhere.

But there are places where sunlight never gets. A place where sun doesn't reach, that's a defect of the place not of the sun. So in that case it all depends very much on the individual, not just on the rays of light coming toward it. Which is why we say, where possible, the rays of wisdom always spread and arise. Realized beings possess infinite wisdoms without limitation. This is the characteristic, qualification, of an enlightened one.

But when we say the body of light, the body of light is something that continues actively. Its activity may be made a bit difficult with ordinary human beings. A master like Jetsun Senge Wangchug, or the master of my master, Nyagla Padma Dudul, when he died and newly become a body of light, many disciples didn't meet him again. Because they hadn't developed their capacity to make contact with the essence of the elements.

But that's not to say that none of the disciples met him again. Because quite surely many were able to have contact. But moreover, a much greater number of other kinds of beings are able to have that contact, like dakinis for example. But we can't know how many other types of beings there are who can have that contact. We spoke only a moment ago of the different phelwar ??, the different solar systems, which exist. So we can suppose that one who exists as a body of light has a much wider circle of acquaintance than just this planet. That is to say, he actively works for the teaching and for others.

But the realization of the body of light is an authentic Sambhogakaya realization. It's not some kind of explanation that there are still a few obstacles for which reason the person hasn't yet achieved total realization. That's not the understanding. This is a way of manifesting which is voluntarily assumed through will. If for a moment that will should flag, if the individual for an instant renounced this way of being for the benefit of others and working for the benefit of others, then that person would immediately become the other kind of Sambhogakaya realization.

This body of light we call jalu ('ja'-lus) normally. In other traditions of Tantrism, there's also something we often call jalu. There are manifestations after death in these other levels of Tantrism where the body disappears. But the method is different. It employs always what's called (sgyu-lus), the mayic body. In the Dzogchen teaching, what we call jalu is rather different. For that matter a practitioner of Dzogchen, but only of the Semde style, can certainly manifest not leaving a body. And it's a common understanding, people will say that this was jalu. Why? Because he's disappeared.

But this doesn't necessarily mean that he re-manifests as a body of light which is actively at work. Because there's no explanation, on that path there's no method of reintegration. Because at that level we speak of lus du tan du ting ??, and lus means to disappear into the atoms, to absorb into, become one with, the very atoms of substance. That is to say, one has realized, fully grasped, knowledge and an aspect of this manifests in this way.

thogay, great transfer

But it's characteristic of Tantrism where much is said about gyulu (sgyu-lus), the mayic body, the principle here is explained in this way, that the state of consciousness unites with the subtle prana, vital energy, and out of this arises a kind of body made only of prana, of vital energy. In Tibetan we say newmay ku (?), and in Tantra that's very very secret. That's usually what's translated as the mayic body. In Dzogchen that's not the same. We don't consider that the body of light, because when we say prana, that's still something relative. Prana is not the state of contemplation. When we say the body of light, it is totally contemplation which is manifested.

Then we have another which is the great transfer. The great transfer doesn't mean that there's some other way of manifesting afterwards. If one achieves either the great transfer or jalu, the body of light, leaving behind him the hair and nails, the actual principle and way of manifesting is the same. The difference is a question of when. In the case of the great transfer, it means one has more completely finished practice in life.

We spoke of the four phases on the path of thogay. We spoke of the fourth phase of that of the consuming of existence. When one has entered into this phase, begun this phase, and dies, then one manifests the body of light. If instead one has completed this fourth phase in life, then death doesn't manifest. That means that this body, this materiality, has entirely been absorbed into or transferred into, inner ying which manifests externally. When this accomplishment of total integration occurs in life, that we call the great transfer.

When we speak of the great transfer, we give as examples the master Vimalamitra and Padmasambhava. In the Bonpo of Zhangzhung, there's the example of a great master called Tapifetza ?? But we don't know how many others have accomplished the great transfer, and nor is it said that it only happens in Tibet clouded in mystery.

This information is not just as a matter of abstract information so we can judge "Now who made the great transfer? And who made the body of light?" and so forth. That's of no interest whatsoever to us. That would be just something linked to history and to give us a notion of what these things are.

What interest us is knowledge of the method, of the practice, that gives these results. This is not something which is lost in time, part of legend or ancient history, like so many things that people fantasize about the far past. This is something present, actual, alive, which we can apply in practice. Not just that we apply the method, but the full realization of it is something that is constantly going on. It's happening all the time.

As I just said, the master of my master, Nyagla Padma Dudul, is one who became one of the protagonists, one of the foremost examples, of this body of light. Nor did it just happen to happen to him. It's something that he was practicing, that he knew he was on his way to, that he he said would happen to him, ?? About three months before his death, he called together all of his old disciples. He wasn't very

Nyagla Padma Dudul

famous. He didn't hold a very important and prestigious position. But he had quite a few disciples, real practitioners, above all, yogis.

And so he called them together, and when they all got there, they were together for about three months. Every day he gave teachings, and they did many many ganapujas. A ganapuja is to adjust and correct any obstacles that there might be between them. And then when the last week came, there's a mountain nearby called Lodra ??, and he said "I want to go up there, and I want to accompanied by ??, have to go up there on that mountain."

When he had been young, he had gone there often, when he travelled far and wide doing the chod. And the practitioners of the chod usually have a little tent. And he had them bring his little tent which he had had as a young man. He wanted to be inside his little tent, and he had them seal it shut by sewing it. He said "Don't come back for seven days." It's not that he was sick and dying. No, there were no such signs.

And many of the disciples begged him "Master, Stay here on earth a little longer." ?? master knows very well what a material human body is, and what a human life is. He said "You'd do better to practice more, and then do your best." And he gave many of them counsel and advice.

And his disciples, much saddened, went down below, went back to their camp down below. They waited a week. The seventh day, it rained a bit, and there were a lot of rainbows and rather beautiful external manifestations. And they all went up to open the tent. They found his suit, as is Tibetan custom with the belt tied around it, and on the clothing there was his hair, and where he had been seated, the place where his hands would have been, they found his fingernails, like a snake who leaves behind his skin. They were all amazed, and from that point he began to be very famous.

And they invited to come the master who had been called Adzom Drugpa, and other people from the Beyul ?? monastery. And Adzom Drugpa did many days of ritual, not to perform a purification, but on the contrary to do a Guruyoga. And with the participation of many people who were there, of his disciples, of various supporters who had contributed, together they collected what was necessary to put up a beautiful tomb for Nyagla Pema Dudul, and place in it the nails and hair. And a bit of his hair and nails and clothes his disciples divided up. This is concrete, real. My master was there, and he told me about it.

Also another master of my master, a Bonpo lama, Lama Shadzai ??, he was called. He became the body of light still more recently. This is since then. His biographies will explain about this, but in this case my master wasn't present when he achieved the body of light, because my master had had teachings from him long before. And there are many others. There are cases of the body of light in 1952, in 1949, quite recent. These are very concrete real events. It's not like some fable or legend or something which is said to have happened long ago in history as is often the case.

But it doesn't mean that a Dzogchen practitioner necessarily is going to become a body of light. That's ?? too. Nor does it mean that a Dzogchen practitioner has to become

daily life, collective practice, mantra a body of light. It doesn't really make much difference. One can perfectly well manifest in the Sambhogakaya in the bardo of the Dharmata. And so more or less this is what we mean by realization. And now we've finished for this morning.

[Saturday afternoon, 30-Jul-82]

This is the last, let's say, explanation in this retreat. And there remains something not explained in this red book. Because this book is a means for applying practice. But we're not to consider this book as a daily practice where one does only this book. As always as was explained in regard to the teaching of Dzogchen, the principle is the base, the path, and the fruit. And these three are the knowledge, represent the knowledge, that we find in contemplation.

And how practice is entered, applied, and carried on, is indicated in the three last statements of Garab Dorje, direct introduction, remaining in a state beyond doubt, and then continuing in the state. And then applying these three, and bringing the practice into daily life, we proceed with awareness, immediate presence, and with the method of self-liberation.

Then when we have the opportunity to meet together, then practitioners together perform collective practice. When we perform collective practice, then we can do these things that involve the method of transformation, the chod and the like. And longing to elaborate a bit, one can do the ganapuja or do the rite that we've done each evening.

But when one is with people, a person who doesn't know about ritual and how to practice ritual, there's no point in making a big scene. One can practice therefore very simply. Also if four or five practitioners come together, one can keep the practice very simple and condensed. So we have here the practices that are entitled rabtu tromay and shintu tromay which are externally extremely simple. There's very little to do. And they are immediately available.

Then we very much employ for collective practice what's found on page 5 which is called tromay. There we find the rite in very few words. Essentially what's there are the mantras that we learn to do. If you know how to do the accompanying visualizations, this is complete even in so brief a version. It starts on page 6. It's over by page 9.

The important thing, also in doing transformation, is much less the words than knowing what you're doing. And with the visualization, the use of mantra is very important. And so we have these mantras and the words to guide the visualization. But if we do something full-scale ritual, ritual implies that we're making a contact with some external force. And external forces can also be those which are dominated by some powerful being. In that case it's not enough to just make believe you're doing it.

First of all you have to have a capacity. If I want to communicate with a spirit for example, a spirit which has dominion over certain energies, first of all I have to open the channel, a way for that spirit also to have communication with me. So the first thing that I communicate is to open the contact with such a spirit.

And many of these means function through the power of

mudra, miracles

mantra and mudra. We've already explained that mantra is a sound that's capable of linking external and internal energies. And then in the ultimate sense, mantra like the song of the vajra are capable of reintegrating with that ?? of energy.

And mudra has an entirely another function. It's capable of communicating with the external. If we proceed to do a ritual, that ritual isn't something that just comes out spontaneously. Everything that we do of the order of rite, ritual, has its principle and has its specific history. When we do the rite of Dorje Legpa for example, it means we enter into the dimension, the situation, which existed when Dorje Legpa had contact with Padmasambhava. Through our concentration we transform into Padmasambhava in wrathful form. We utilize a secret mantra of which we know the real meaning and which is the pact or treaty that was made between Padmasambhava and Dorje Legpa.

In the midst of this come many mudras to justify and validate it, to make it true. Let's say a person who is doing some kind of secret work, if he meets some co-conspirator in the street, to pass unobserved, he has to have some way of making a sign. He makes some sign to justify his identity, and without further ado I accept that he's part of the plot.

Many mudras function exactly like this. It seems very simple, but these have a precise function. Then many combinations of mantra and mudra, with that form of gesture, with that sound, have from the beginning the power to authenticate, to validate, a certain energy.

You always have to remember that we exist as body, voice, and mind. We have a material body, and it's with this that we present the form, the mudra. The mantra comes through our voice, through sound. And then we have concentration through the mind. As we link all these three together, we accomplish a function. We make something actually work.

If a person actually finds himself in what we call the great contemplation, he doesn't need any mudra, or mantra, or particular concentration to accomplish what has to be done. When one is capable of reintegration, and finds oneself living in the dimension of reintegration, no superior force could exist or is required. But if one is still behind with this knowledge as a mere idea, and one is still living as a practical matter, all relative things as if they were completely so, then it's necessary to intervene with mantra, mudra, and concentration.

For example when we finish the practice of the tun, at the very end there's a mantra that we always employ to authenticate, to validate, our invocation. The very fact that we use this to authenticate what we've done means that we're not in the condition of reintegration which could dispense with that.

For example in Christian history, it's said that Christ one day met a blind man and gave him back his sight. We find this type of event in the lives of many Bodhisattvas. It doesn't mean that one is capable of miraculously canceling the karma of an individual. But there are many possibilities of moments of reintegration, some events can manifest, some phenomena can manifest, which for us is called "miracle".

collective practice, Ekajati

If we find ourselves faced with a blind person, we know very well, poor fellow, doesn't see anything. He's suffering. We can have lots of compassion, real compassion, not artificial, for him. And recite a mantra, and say "I really want you to regain your sight and be able to see." I can also think this concretely. No result, he's still blind. Why was Christ able to do it, and we not? This is what we mean by capacity. For us it's just an idea. It doesn't happen concretely. It doesn't become the case.

So when one doesn't yet have the capacity for reintegration, then when one does something, when one carries out some kind of practice or ritual, or even an invocation, one makes use of mantra to give it reality, to give it validity. So in this we say that the working of rite and ritual is always linked to the use of these instruments, mudra, mantra, and visualization or concentration.

And so when we meet together as practitioners, instead of just jabbering and having a smoke together, we could do some collective practice. Because collective practice has a great advantage. Many people who don't succeed in finding a state of practice of whatever kind, when they instead do practice with others who are more experienced and more able, they receive a great advantage, a kind of assistance, from the capacity of the others.

For example in the college of practice, the meditation college, when someone was not able to perform a breathing practice like kumbhaka, although he knew perfectly well how to do it, sometimes we would do what's lurub ??, that is, those people who were weaker in practice would sit at the very center of the group of practitioners. And they were surrounded by the more able practitioners. And those who were less well able but not unable would be at the outer fringes, so practicing two or three times together, that person would become able to experience the practice.

This means that there is a way of actually helping people, helping each other, collectively. Also collective practice has its particular vibration, sensation, or experience involved that's quite different from practicing alone. At times a person alone may be a bit lost. But if he practices collectively with others, he may have a kind of refreshment renewal of mind.

And then this practice is a bit connected with the guardians. We all know that when we do these latter practices in here, there are the mantras of the guardians. Guardians are not just a notion. But rather the guardians, from the moment that one begins to follow a teaching, are present. The guardians may be realized or semi-realized individuals who have had contact with the masters and from the beginning have had a relationship with the teaching.

For example Ekajati, from the very beginning when Garab Dorje first transmitted this teaching in human form, became immediately patronness of the teaching. That is to say, Garab Dorje put the security and preservation of the teaching in the hands of Ekajati, and gave her the responsibility of guarding it. The teaching that she's guarding is not just a book or a tradition. The true teaching that we mean is knowledge, that knowledge. That knowledge of Dzogchen, when one enters into

guardians, Ekajati, mammo
it, when it begins to live in the individual, and the individual begins to live in that knowledge, automatically and immediately that means contact with the guardians.

But connected with a guardian like Ekajati are many many different forms and aspects of external energy. When normally we concentrate on Ekajati, we also say "mammo chechung wangmo ??", that is, chechung wangpo meaning manifold, numberless, I can't state exactly a number for it, but many many many. So with her are numberless mammo, forces that dominate a given times, given energies, given locations, forces that have power over certain domains. And these too are guides to the teaching.

So the guardians means this, that as soon as we speak of the teaching, the implication is that behind it and supporting it are always the guardians. When a master gives an important teaching, even if he doesn't say anything or pronounce anything, or do anything overt, you can be sure that he has an inner intention to ask the permission of the guardians and the dakinis and the like to give the teaching.

At times there come many manifestations of these forces, and if something is not as it should be, if something is not correct, quite serious problems can come about. This can happen as problems not only for a teacher, but they can happen to any individual who let's say got near to the teaching, and then doesn't behave in an appropriate fashion. That can have rather unfortunate consequences. Problems can arise for that person.

There are not only guardians such as Ekajati, or who answer to the description we gave of Ekajati. If only they were all like these that we name, Ekajati, Mahakala, Rahula, and so forth, all of whom are very high levels of evolutionary enlightened realized beings, then there wouldn't be any problem. These forces too will find themselves in a whole dimension such as we said earlier of mandala. There's always a major figure in each of these mandala, and these are these major guardian figures such as those we named.

But around them, filling the rest of that dimension, are always many many other beings. There's a class of mammo over which Ekajati reigns, and those which are mammo of wisdom, those like Ekajati, ?? and certain others, are one category of those ... [tape gap] ... but around them are also thousands of what we call worldly mammo. And they if you make the slightest error are very quick to react, to condemn.

I'm very intimate with Ekajati. You could even say I'm on a very very close and friendly basis with her. And if some mammo behaves badly with me, I can say to Ekajati "Listen, that mammo of yours isn't doing the right thing." But I can't cope with thousands of mammo. So one had better be a little conscious and watch one's behavior. And that's why we do every so often a little bit of the rite of the guardians. At times doing the rite of the guardians means having a living contact with the guardians.

At times it's done to obtain some advantage for the practitioner. Because we know that we live in dualism and we have to transcend that condition. But meanwhile if I have to deal with a problem, I don't think "Oh well it's dualism" and disregard it. If it's a problem here in duality, I have to

ganachakra, ganapuja

resolve it dualistically knowing how to do that. So at such a moment, one needs the guardians. So we have a very simple practice in this regard that one can do also with mantra, and here it is on page 6 to page 9. It's very complete in this regard. This is a way for us of doing this practice.

And then we have that of the ganapuja. The practice of the ganapuja is here entitled shintu trojay (shin-tu spros-bcas), and it starts pages 25 and 26, and for awhile there, just like the practice we always do with the Guruyoga and the rest of the rite. But at the middle of page 29 begins what is actually titled there ganapuja.

Now there are two things. One is called the ganapuja and one is called the ganachakra. The ganapuja means something rather simple. You make some offerings. And the ganachakra means something very concrete indeed. But usually we can't do the ganachakra. If one is rather special and would like to have a party with the dakinis, then you can do the ganachakra. Then you're at a party that's rather beyond the limits of our condition. Until we're up to that one, we do something that's a little less. It's basically to symbolize and represent that, and that's the ganapuja.

Puja means an offering. And gana means something like the aggregation, the complete accumulation. In this case we have the initial four verses which are for authentication and preparation. Here we have, the middle of page 29, the line dagnid khadroi thugginay (bdag-nyid mkha'-'gro'i thug-??-nas), I myself manifesting as the dakini, and from the very heart of the dakini, light expands. You will recall that when we do practice in the period of the waning moon, we manifest as, and transform as, Sihamukha, the dakini.

Now in the period of the waxing growing moon, we manifest as, we transform into, Guru Dragpo. In that case, instead of saying as is written here, you say instead of dagnid khadroi thugginay, you say dagnid phalchen thugginay. Phalchen is the heruka, the manifestation of the heruka. If you want to write it in this transcription mode, you would write B A L Q E N.

From this heart emerges the letters RAM YAM and KHAM. The ram is the essence of the element of fire. Yam is air. And kham is water. [Here it's mis-written. Under kham it says air. Ram is fire. That's not a problem. Yam is wind or air. That's all right. But kham should be water. Instead it's written "air".] So when we do this purification, we say with air we're cleaning ourselves. With the wind, we're cleaning ourselves. With the water we're cleaning ourselves. And with fire, we're burning clean. Whatever it is, you can purify it with these three words.

With the words OM AH HUM, the next line, you transform whatever it is that you're offering into nectar. With the next line dodyon namkha nyamparphel ('dod-yon nam-mkha' mnyam-par-'phel), you multiply it into manifold or limitless offerings. So with ram yam kham, you purify. With OM AH HUM, you multiply. After that comes the mantra that invites the Guru, deva, dakini, and which multiplies the offerings just like in our normal rite.

Then when we talk of the ganapuja, in reality, in principle there are three phases of ganapuja. The first one is an offering to the three roots, and ?? all the

ganapuja

manifestations of the divinity. And here we are top of page 30 and there's no need to explain it. This is what's done with the offering of the ganapuja and the lines are also word for word translated here.

And the principle of the offering is that we offer what pleases us on the assumption that it pleases those to whom we make offering. We have a tradition in regard to these offerings which specifies that certain things be present. But if we look at the underlying meaning of that, it's basically that what we offer is what pleases us.

First we offer, then we confess. And this is the action which adjusts all the discords and problems that there may be. For example in Tantrism, if you've had many many initiations, therefore have taken many vows and have not carried out those vows and discharged your obligation, here you readjust that discrepancy. If you've behaved badly toward the guardians of the teaching, if there is any discord, if there's been any bad behavior between disciple and disciple, between disciple and master, this is the occasion to readjust whatever problems there are. With these problems present in mind, with awareness of them, you recite the hundred syllable mantra.

Then after that we have one by one offerings to the various guardians. First of all there's Ekajati. Since Ekajati is considered the guardian number one in the teaching of Dzogchen. After Ekajati there's Mahakala. Rather this offering is not only to one principal Mahakala, but also embraces the five major Mahakalas, and the 72 secondary Mahakalas.

After that comes Rahula and all of his dependents, his retinue. Rahula is always presented as a guardian of maximum rathfulness and ferocity and is not so much of this planet as the dominator of other planets, and works through their influence. Then we have Dorje Legpa with all of his retinue. In general we say that Ekajati, Rahula and Dorje Legpa are the primary guardians of Dzogchen.

And then we have Tseringma who is in particular the guardian of the Nyingthig and more specifically still of the Longchen Nyingthig. And then you'll remember that after that we also use in America the mantra of the Tsen. And then after that we have the mantra of the eight classes in general. And then after that there are some words to ask for the action that these forces must perform.

And then there are some phrases of offering to the local guardians. When we speak of local guardians, we don't mean only guardians of a given place. But there are also guardians for every unit of time. So that for example there is a guardian for this day. There's a guardian for this very hour when we're sitting here. And we're addressing all of these guardians. And after that, we're on pages 32, 33 and following, we have the famous invocation of Dorje Legpa. On page 37, finishing Dorje Legpa, we've finished with all the guardians.

And with that we've finished the first of the three phases of ganapuja, that which is called external offering to all of the divinities and the three roots. There, page 37, begins what call the interior offering. Interior offering is to what in Tantrism is called the vajra body. For an

ganapuja

individual his own body is known from the very beginning as a mandala. We say in Dzogchen that from the very beginning the individual is illuminated.

In this way we explain that the aggregates of which the individual is composed manifest as the five Dhyani Buddhas. And the five elements of which the individual is composed manifest as the five yum of the five Dhyani Buddhas. We have there on page 37 dansum (gdan-gsum. Gdan-sum means three bases. And the dansum means yab & yum). Dansum meaning first of all the five yab, the Dhyani Buddhas, who are the pure vision of the five aggregates of which each of us is composed.

And secondly the dan means the five elements which in pure vision are manifested as, perceived as, the yum of the five Dhyani Buddhas. The third dan is the fact of subject and object, that we live our situation as subject and object, and this is sempa and semma ???. For example it's said that the eyes manifest as sa'i snying po. The ears manifest as Vajrapani. And the nose manifests as nam-mkha'i snying-po. The tongue is ??, that is, Avalokitesha. The body is ??. The mind is Kuntuzangpo. That is, in each case there's subject and there's object, sempa and semma ??.

And this is not all, but there are also all the other ways of working and functioning of the mandala which is our body, and these all manifest as the mandala. All of this manifests as the mandala, or dimension which is interior. Aware of these our very bases, our ground, our interiority as mandala, we make offering. And this series of offerings ends with the words at the very end there "A la la ho". A la la ho means joyously.

Then at the bottom where it says A Ho Maha Sukha Ho. The significance of A Ho is marvelous. Maha means great, huge. Sukha means joy, so this is the great joy. We say usually dewa chenpo, meaning the great sensation of pleasure, dewa meaning sensation or pleasure. And this word Ho at the end is a way of saying "to enjoy" or "to appreciate". This itself, this A Ho Maha Sukha Ho is like the mantra of the ganapuja. All the other words were like guidelines for visualization.

If one really understands the meanings of the ganapuja, of the outer ganapuja, of the inner ganapuja, as far as words go, this could be enough. This "A Ho Maha Sukha Ho" can be the whole ganapuja. These few words are not only sufficient for the whole inner offering, for enjoying the whole inner offering, but they're also sufficient for participating in the ganachakra, the party with the dakinis. And then afterward it says once more "A La La Ho" meaning marvelous, enjoy, eat. And you make this inner offering.

Then there's the third phase of the ganapuja. That's at the top of page 38. That's for what we call the remains, or the dregs. There are two ways of dealing with these remains. If you have offering, you can divide in three parts, and this is the third part. Or more truly what these remains or dregs are is that after the practitioners have finished eating is what they have quite deliberately left for the remains. And this is offered through the power of mantra to the lesser beings. These are above all, guests of the six lokas, and those to whom we owe some karmic debt. And this is done with this

yaks, translation
mantra "ucchista bhalimta khahi".

That's how we do the ganapuja. If one wants to do a super simple ganapuja, it's enough to say "A Ho Maha Sukha Ho". But in general when it happens that there are a number of practicers, it can be advantageous to do a ganapuja. And here in this book is all you need to do it. So now I've explained the whole book, and nothing remains unexplained.

There's the family of yaks there at the bottom of the page. That's simple. Normally when you find a holy book, you have images of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas. And to have a picture of yaks in there is like some kind of impure vision. You'd never find that in a holy book. So in the Dzogchen teaching, when we say that everything is perfected, the whole vision is perfected ... [tape gap] ... Because that family belongs to the energy we call tsal. And this is part of what we say, the famous statement "We must find things as they are. We must let be as is".

So if the yaks are there, we don't chase them away. A yak is a kind of symbol, because it's said in Tibetan "He understands nothing, just like a yak." Then what we're saying here is that even the yaks belong right here. And now the explaining is over. It's finished with the explanation.

But I want to say two more words about what I was discussing yesterday. Yesterday I said "The teaching is over. There's something else I want to say." We talked a bit about collaboration, cooperation, between all of you who are interested. And this is of concern not only today, but also tomorrow, and in the future, the big perspective. We've said above all that it's important to not make a mistake, to set an example of error for the future.

And one consideration is that in the Tibetan language we have many many texts of Dzogchen. And we can say that in western languages these don't exist yet. When we talk about Dzogchen, you're obliged to learn about it and follow it through the voice of someone. Like that book which is considered to be a book by Longchenpa which is translated by Guenther. There's a book called rangdrol korsum (rang-grol skor-gsum), the three rangdrol, the three self-liberations. And this is a principal text of the communication of Dzogchen.

But many other texts like the Ngalso Korsum (ngal-gso skor-gsum), how is it entitled in English? That's a big text. It's considered a text about Dzogchen. In fact it's not true that there is anything much to do with Dzogchen. Therefore there is nothing available, and most people have not the least idea of what's Dzogchen.

So it's very important that work be done so that people can have the opportunity to read the texts of Dzogchen in western languages. To translate a book of Dzogchen, the only person who can do that is someone who has knowledge of the teaching. It's just not enough to know a little Tibetan and know how to use a dictionary. Because we know very well that when we say the "state of rigpa", in the Dzogchen teaching, that's important. Instead the dictionary will tell you, and the Sutric teachings will tell you, that that's what we would translate as "intelligence". So if you translate these works, understanding the terms in the normal Buddhist way, nothing of Dzogchen comes through or is arrived at.

translation

And these texts of prime importance for the future. We don't whether in the future anybody will actually translate these or not. Instead in this moment, we have an actual fact that there are many people who are interested in the teachings, committed to learning Tibetan, and to making use of that knowledge. But our condition, our situation, is very very delicate and complicated.

Let's say that we've got somebody who has learned Tibetan, who is all equipped to get to work, is ready to go. There's no work. There's no job for him. That person probably would have done far better to learn automobile repair. That's our real situation. If the situation is like that today, we hardly know what it's going to be like tomorrow. It may well be that all of these infinitely precious, extremely important and interesting books tomorrow will finish simply in museums or even in book dealer shows where somebody notes with curiosity "Yea, these are Tibetan books."

There aren't many Tibetans. And the not-many-Tibetans who exist are disappearing one by one. Lots of young Tibetans aren't at all interested in the teaching. ?? how to be interested in the teachings. There's a real and clear and present danger that this be lost, and if this kind of knowledge is lost, it's not just a loss for Tibetans, it's a general loss for all of humanity. So we have to have some awareness of this, and look into the possibilities in the present and actual situation.

So it's very important that we create the possibility of work for people who have this capacity. So we've said that we're trying to create situations and places where it's possible to do retreat, where it's also possible to do work. And this is a program in which we have to all participate and help to make happen, all of those of us who are interested.

Today we're preparing such a place in Italy. Tomorrow we'll be preparing such places in other parts of the world. But it's not just something that we want to prepare, and plan, and project. It's something for interested people to actually make happen. Because I alone, I can't do it all. If it's a matter of translation, if somebody asks me what that word means, I can explain very well what it means. But it's not enough to just translate two words to make a book. First you have to translate. Secondly when the translation is completed, it has to be published. Meanwhile if somebody is doing a translation, the person who is doing the translation has to eat. He has to survive.

So if we don't have a base to begin with, it's not going to be very easy. So I say that we should all be aware of this, and whoever wants to make a real contribution to this, to participate in making these things happen, is very very welcome. I mean participation in all senses. I don't just mean money. But it can also be material things, objects. And it can be spiritual participation, that that's fundamental, being with this.

But don't think that this is somehow limited to only one place. For example I'm going to go to Tibet. I have, let's call him, a friend there. He's a disciple of one of my uncles who I met in Lhasa last year. He was more than 12 years in

Samye

prison. And they let him out, and now he lives freely. He has a good knowledge let's say of the teaching. And he's a serious and real practitioner.

I said "Well what are you doing now?" He has no program, no basis, no way to stay alive. Certainly the government doesn't give him money, nor food, nothing. I said to him "Well how do you live? Who gives you food?" He goes among the people who are faithful, who are pious, and they help him. He wants to go back to eastern Tibet to rebuild a monastery where my uncle lived, a little monastery. Because there are many believing people who want to rebuild. It seems that now the Chinese are even disposed to help with this reconstruction.

But I said to him "Well look, it's not that important to build some monastery. It's much more important if people understand the meaning of the teaching. If you want to reconstruct a really principal base, it would be much better to rebuild Samye. Because Samye is very much linked with the history of Tibet. And because when Padmasambhava went to Tibet, the first thing he did was build the temple of Samye." He said he didn't think he was up to this task. I said "Well, is there someone who is taking the responsibility to rebuild Samye?" He knew of 2 or 3 monks who had fled and has escaped somewhere. But in short, nobody.

Certainly Samye during the cultural revolution was destroyed down to the last stone. There are just two bits of wall left. The Chinese have actually announced that they want to appropriate funds for the reconstruction. But even if that money of the government isn't enough, you can be quite sure that many many believing people will participate.

But among these many, there is nobody who is assuming a leadership role or taking the responsibility. Because many people there are also afraid to take the responsibility. They think "Today the Chinese will support that. And you take the responsibility and they give you backing and even some degree of approval." But these people have all experienced torture and the cultural revolution. They are all wary of being sent to jail tomorrow. And they all have this kind of fear.

You see that even he was saying to me "Well who knows if I can manage it or not. I'm not sure." In the end I persuaded him. And he agreed "Yes" he'll take on that responsibility. And then I told him "Now I have many many disciples, and we have a community. It's called the Dzogchen Community in many different places. And we will surely participate and help spiritually and also financially as we can." But as I said to him "We can't do anything unless somebody here takes the responsibility to get on with the project."

When I'm there, all the Chinese authorities show me perfect respect. But I'm a foreigner. They only recognize me as a former citizen. And an ex-citizen has no right to intervene and make something happen there. But today there is the right there to go into the temple to practice, to do all these things.

So now just a few weeks before I left Italy I received a letter from Lhasa. And that Khanpo wrote to me that just as he had promised me he has now gone to Samye, and he's there

translation

rebuilding it. And he has managed to locate and bring together some of the former monks of Samye. And he found many faithful people who are participating. So you see it's true that man can always do something. If they're coming from all different places and managing to get to Samye, it shows that one can accomplish things.

But we mustn't think of ourselves in terms of some particular place, some specific parochial location, our center, or something of this kind. Let's open up a bit, and look at the future in a larger more open way. So I really ask of all of you, your participation. It's really useful, and it's really important. And now I've finished.

Also welcome not only you, but people you might have contact with. For example people who finance somebody translating a book. I've gotten the information they're doing this in England. If we can get five or six or seven Tibetologists, we've got a lot of them, to work at translating a really important book. We're not talking about a handsome salary. But six or seven months of enough money to eat and sleep and cope with needs.

And then we also have, if somebody knows something about publishing and printing, we have books ready for printing. There's a book on which Kennard principally worked which is ready to go. It's a very very important text of Dzogchen. It was one of the very first books that was translated by Vairocana. It doesn't mean we can't find a publisher, but if somebody of us has an idea in this regard, has some inspiration or connection that can facilitate it, come forth. Things like this, there's lots to think of. There's lots to do. We do the rite tomorrow morning before breakfast, 6:30 tomorrow morning inside. The ganapuja is inside at seven o'clock tonight.

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dualism, physical energy

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We will explain a little of what I spoke of yesterday. Yesterday we spoke above all of what is called dualism, which is our principal way of seeing, and our way of having a conviction. And this is a fundamental basis for the teachings. Because if one must think of how to realize oneself, the first thing that you have to discover is what is realization. And one must know why must one realize oneself.

The teaching becomes a bit like a fashion or at times you get the phenomenon of sort of groups, cults, that do things differently from society. And there are many types of groups which more or less manifest dissatisfaction with society. But this is not really something that represents the spirit of the teachings.

In this case it is very important to discover what is really the principle. If one hasn't made that discovery, one does not have a true conviction about the teachings. If somebody explains to you the qualities of a certain kind of medicine, even it may be an important and very precious medicine, that medicine has no value whatsoever to you if you are not sick. The function of a medicine is to heal a person.

And therefore the first thing that you have to discover is what your sickness is. If you have really discovered that "Yes, there is an illness. I do have an illness that needs healing", then you can really understand what value this medicine may or may not have for you. And thus the teaching must have its principle.

As I said yesterday, at times we speak of faith arising. At times faith may be based on vibration. One may sincerely state "This that is a stable faith". But it cannot be really stable. It cannot be a real faith until one has discovered the true reality of this thing. Thus when one says "realization", it means that one has discovered what one's own condition is, how the condition of the person himself is conditioned.

First of all examining one's present existence, there is one's physical material body, one's prana or physical energy, and one's mind which judges. These three are the principal means which condition and limit a person. Since we were very little up until now, all of the things that we have done have made use of these three principal elements. At times we have been conditioned by these three elements. At times one does not do it by will, by choice, but automatically as a kind of duty of a person.

For example, we eat when it is time to eat. We always do that. When the moment of hunger comes, we look in every way for some food to eat. If we do not eat, we feel hungry. Why hunger? Because there is a physical body. Thus the physical body constrains you to eat. The same thing is true when there is an illness or physical sensation. It has its effect. All this is linked to our physical body. And thus we are always following, and at the service of, our physical body.

The same is true of our energy. Our physical energy does not permit certain things. For example one wants to be calm but does not succeed in being calm. One's mind is thinking "I want to stay seated" but the person gets up and walks up and down and is agitated like that. When someone is very

physical energy, judgment agitated, his friends say "Be calm. Calm down." But he does not become calm, even if the mind has certain considerations. If that calm is not permitted by physical energies, the mind cannot function. The mind's notion of calm has become like an empty thought or a fantasy if the physical energy is not with it.

For example if at that moment when one is very hungry, the mind thinks "I am eating", if a person has not realized transformation, this thought is an empty thought. It does not resolve the problem of hunger. This means that the mind cannot go right into commanding the body and the physical energy. It is very important to understand that the mind is dependent upon the physical energies and the body. Thus there has to be awareness, both of the body and of the physical energies. Thus we are all conditioned by the body and above all by one's physical energy.

And then above all we tend to consider the mind as something just and correct, that is to say, what we normally call logic. He who performs philosophical studies always proceeds on this level as far as he can go. When there is no further possibility of proceeding logically then you just say that whatever it is does not exist. This is what they call the mind. As far as you can get by justifying and reasoning in this way is what we call mind.

Thus when we say that the justification or the judgment of the mind is or isn't correct, there is no guarantee that it is so. Because judgment always remains, always stays, at the dualistic level. When we say something is dualistic, sometimes it can seem true. But that is fallible because when we say "the truth", it is always interdependent with "not true". This is what we call dualism. When we say something exists, we have also automatically accepted the possibility that it may not exist. And this is what we call interdependence.

If one doesn't go beyond this limit then you cannot really call the state that he is in realization. Everything has remained at the level of the mental concept. We have to remember that in Buddhist philosophy, we speak of the relative and absolute conditions. This is a way of explaining, because normally in philosophy, particularly at the sutra level, they do a very extensive analysis of these two considerations.

But an analysis like this cannot be put into practice. In practice, a practitioner has to put himself in this state. Because our mind and our way of judging... If we say there is a man in a house, we do not know how to think at the same time that he is not there. This is the nature of our knowledge. Thus we do not really have a way of understanding the relative and the absolute conditions at the same time as the same thing.

When one has entered into practice and knows what is meant by practice, then after that when he reads an analysis of the relative and the absolute, then at last he understands what is really meant. If one has never entered into the practice then one is always stuck at the intellectual level. If one reads about the concept of the absolute and relative, it seems to such a person that there are two different levels of analysis. Of course it says there in the text that they

elephant, sectarianism

are the same thing. But the fact that they are the same thing for such a person is understood only in theory.

For this reason, Buddha himself gave an example. He gave the example of the blind men who tried to measure the elephant. Of course the elephant was very large. None of the blind men had eyes to see the general picture of the elephant. Each of them touched the elephant in a different place. He who touched the legs of the elephant judged that the elephant was like a tree trunk. And he who touched the stomach of the elephant considered that the elephant was like a ceiling. And thus each one judged according to what he had understood and touched. This is like the way of judging and the way of understanding of the mind. So judgment of the mind can never really touch what truly exists.

When we examine the different contending schools for example, there used to be in olden times four schools in Buddhism. But speaking for example of mahayana sutras, there were two so-called superior schools, the yogacara and the madyamika. Compared to other schools of Buddhism it was considered that yogacara had an outlook, a form of logic, that was quite perfect. And so the yogacara school had great success.

Great success, what does that normally mean? Great success means many people were convinced and followed that point of view. And thus that became a big group. This logic was accepted by many people. Thus everybody began to consider that logic was something real and concrete.

But even though the yogacara school was considered so important, when the great masters of the madyamika came, like Nagarjuna and Shantideva for example, they began arguing with the yogacara position, debating it and accusing it. That means that "My position is perfect. Your position is mistaken." And this is how it usually happens. And the madyamika school won over the yogacara school. In this case what is the truth? The truth is that the yogacara consideration was not correct. Madyamika is correct. And thus everybody went to madyamika and thus the group of adherents to the madyamika philosophy grew larger. And thus Madhyamika became famous.

But Madhyamika also had two different currents. One was called Madhyamika rangyudpa (rang rgyud pa ??). This was the school of Shantaraksita, one of the first Buddhists to arrive in Tibet. And the other school was the school of the theory of Nagarjuna. And those two also debated and argued. Nagarjuna accused the other school. He said "You people affirm something". To affirm something means to say "our position is so and so", and Nagarjuna denied this.

But he did not state a position to substitute for it because Nagarjuna maintained that to affirm something was a defect. And thus this means that the school of Shantaraksita was not correct. And thus Nagarjuna had a big victory. So in the Buddhist schools, it came to be considered that Nagarjuna was supreme as far as the explanation and the philosophy goes.

But is this really the ultimate point? If we speak of practice, if you have to go into practice, not even this is adequate. If all we want to do is chatter about, and justify, what philosophy is, then yes, the system of Nagarjuna is

great perfection, basis superior. Even in the teachings of Dzogchen, there is no statement, no reasoning, which will go beyond that.

But in Dzogchen what we say is that you have to go into practice. The principle of the teaching of Dzogchen has three considerations. We speak of the base and the way and the fruit. These three represent the way of performing an analysis. It is not a matter of an intellectual study. But it is a way of explaining, of transmitting. If one does not know what the base is, you can not understand what the fruit is, and what the way is.

Because Dzogchen means "great perfection". This great perfection means the state of the individual himself. It does not mean that some god or some Buddha has arrived at the great perfection and helps me to perfect myself. It does not mean that. It means that the principle is the individual himself. So at the very base, the individual is perfect, is a great perfection. And the way is to enter into, to manifest, to display, this great perfection that one is.

And then when we speak of realization we mean that this manifestation of one's perfection and wisdom has become total. And this is what we speak of as realization. Thus when we say Dzogchen, the great perfection, we mean the base, the way, and the fruit, always all three.

This base which is the state of the individual is explained in the teachings of Dzogchen above all by the example of the sun in the sky. The sky, what does that mean? Sky means a space which is present everywhere. In Tibetan we speak of zhi (gzhi). Every individual is present as this zhi or basis. Everyone the same. In this case it is very similar to what is said in Hinduism when it is said that every being is a little bit of Brahma. It does not mean that Dzogchen says that. It does mean that the way in which zhi is present in every individual is the same.

We speak of a space, or sky. We speak of this space as present within a vase or a room, or the sky. It is the same space. This means the zhi or basis for everyone is the same. The difference we explain in Hinduism or in Dzogchen is the difference between individuals. Because when we say individuals, we mean that I am not you. You are not her. We are not the same. Nor does we mean that when someone is realized, everyone is unified into them and it becomes a kind of ???. That is not what is meant.

Zhi or basis is always composed of a clarity of the individual. This is what we refer to with the example of the sun. If there were ten suns in the sky, we would distinguish ten different suns, and not say that all these ten are one sun. Thus sky and sun are two different things as a way of seeing.

Given that there is the same basis, what does sun mean in general? Sun is that which shines for us, that which manifests light. When we say the sky, it does not mean that it manifests something. It is just the condition. For example, we are feeling calm and suddenly a thought arises. This thought, where did it come from? Where is it now? Where has it gone to? If we were to do a research on that, you would find nothing. You would only find emptiness. And even if you performed that research thousands of times as regards

void, clarity, energy
to thousands of different thoughts, you would always come up with the same answer: void, emptiness.

And not just one person. But if tens of people, hundreds of people, were to perform that same research, you would always find the same void. The thought would come up out of nothing and return into nothing. This way of being nothing, being void, is the same for ten different people, for a hundred different people. There is never a difference.

When you do not find anything and yet thoughts keep arising all the same, it seems as if there is nothing and yet something continues to go on. This we call clarity. This we can also call manifestation. Thus something is happening. Something is working. This is the example of the sun in the sky ...

... is that we proceed with the example of the mirror. Take this mirror her for example. This mirror is also a means for introduction to Dzogchen and also for transmission. But above all, it is a means for obtaining knowledge of what is the true zhi or base of the individual.

When we speak of the zhi, there are three explanations given. You will have to understand here that it is not that I am giving an analysis of some kind of reasoning or argument. We are speaking of our condition, the condition of the individual himself. When we say an individual, what is an individual?

So we explain in three ways: the essence, the nature, and the energy. These three are like the fundamental basis of what we call the zhi or the base of the individual. When we say the essence, it is really exactly truly what is this condition. But it does not say how it manifests or how it functions or how it presents itself.

When we say the nature, we mean above all how it presents itself. For example I think many of you have read Buddhist books, whether mahayana sutras or tantras where they all speak of three bodies principally. We speak of the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and the nirmanakaya. And it is also explained how these three bodies present themselves. Then also our similes ?? correspond to these dharmakaya and sambhogakaya.

It is said that the sambhogakaya is like the reflection of the moon in water. It means that the reflection is not the true moon but it is visible. And this type of phenomenon is what we speak of as manifestation, manifestation by way of light, through the light. We say "manifestation through the light" because the light is the essence of the elements. It means that it does not manifest itself materially, but it is the essence of those elements which do manifest themselves. This is what we mean by the nature of the individual.

And then we say "the energy". When we say energy, we mean the way of manifesting whether it is pure vision or impure karmic vision. We are manifesting as what we call the physical. Now for example, when we speak of the mirror, the mirror possesses its capacity to reflect. We speak of the capacity to reflect as the clarity and purity of the mirror.

In the mirror there manifest very many different images, reflections. It might be beautiful. It might be ugly. This we call energy, what it manifests. This energy that manifests

mirror, reflections

from the mirror is not outside of the mirror but it is within the mirror itself. But if a person observes the mirror and he looks at the mirror, he can effectively see a subject and an object, two things, dualism. And a person that does not yet understand or have knowledge of the reflection might also have attachment to certain reflections for example.

Thus we say that everything which reflects in a mirror, whether ugly or beautiful, is a precise symbol of the material things by which we are surrounded. When we do not find ourselves in the state of the mirror, we always find ourselves at the level of the reflections. We live judging these reflections as beautiful or ugly, accepting those things which please us and renouncing, refusing, those things which do not. This is what is meant by our way of being with the mental concept.

As a practical matter, what does the mind mean here? The mind represents reflections. But the mind does not represent the clarity and purity of the mirror as such. What does it mean, that someone practices? It means that the person tries to find himself in the state of the mirror itself. But how is he to find himself in this state? One has to proceed by way of the reflections. If there could exist a transparent reflecting mirror, it means that one directs oneself toward the state of the mirror as such, and knows how to utilize it and make use of all reflections, beautiful and ugly. Knowing how to make use of them means also possessing the knowledge that these reflections do not have in themselves the power to condition a person.

For example a beautiful reflection, no matter how beautiful, when you re-look at it in the mirror, does not have the power to give pleasure to the state of the mirror. Similarly you cannot give displeasure to the state of the mirror. To the state of the mirror as such it makes no difference whatsoever if what it reflects is beautiful or ugly.

The difference exists for a person following the reflections. There is a difference for someone who finds himself and lives among the reflections. And this is what we call the relative condition. Thus if a person possesses this knowledge, the reflection is not a factor which would condition him.

Let's look at a mirror for example. Inside the mirror let's say we see a splendid food and we are all very very hungry. When we see that food there, we think immediately "Ah, I would like to eat food like that". Or we say to ourselves "I wonder where the food is that is reflected in that mirror?" But we don't seek that reflection, because we know perfectly well what a reflection is.

We have a principle that the reflection is not something real. At that point, there is no need to have a discussion with somebody saying "It is a reflection. It is not real" and judging it logically. It is not necessary. We know. Perhaps a small child that has never seen a mirror might be fooled or someone who has lived all his life as a primitive in the forest somewhere. He might not know what a mirror is. And when he unexpectedly sees a reflection in the mirror, he could confuse it with reality.

dream, karmic vision

Thus you have this knowledge and it is not real. This knowledge about the reflection permits a practitioner to understand that all reflections are the same and that they are not true. Many people are a bit surprised by this, and they say "How can you do it? Something that isn't real seems so real? And how can you live like this?" But there is no preoccupation for this, no worry about this, because in the moment that you have to accept something or renounce something, in that moment it proves itself to be there, the moment it is put to the test.

We know for example that sometimes an ugly and unpleasant dream takes place. You wake up from the nightmare. As soon as you wake up, you say "Ah, thank goodness it was only a dream". That proves that the dream was not real. But it is not real for you now that you are awake. If you had not awoken it would still be real for you in the dream.

We say it is always a dream. It is all like a dream. We can say this when we have woken up, because we are no longer in the state of dream. But while we still find ourselves in the state of dream, in that case it is real for us. When you go to sleep, after awhile you enter into a state of dream, just like being born. Until you die, which is the consequence of this birth, there will be human vision, that is to say, beauty, ugliness, pleasure, pain, and all of that involved in human vision.

It is just like that in a dream. Obviously a life from birth until death is actually longer than a dream. But it is important to understand that the dream is real for the dreamer. And in the same way our human life is real for us in human vision. We believe that human vision is very concrete. The human world is very real. But that of course also only means "It is concrete. It is real" for as long as you are living as human being.

Just like a state of dream also has its awakening, so there is also a waking up out of the human life, the human situation. And that is when we die. When we die, we are no longer human beings. We are sort of accustomed to thinking that we are human beings and we will always be human beings. But that depends on what is called karma. It may be true that you are going to continue as a human being or maybe not. The truth is that the moment that a man is dead, he is no longer a man.

A horse for example finds grass delicious. And he keeps finding the taste of grass delicious as long as he is a horse. As soon as he is not a horse anymore, he is dead. He also loses that delicious taste for grass. A rooster that knows how to sing every morning, as long as he is a rooster, he can keep crowing. But as soon as the rooster dies, he loses his capacity to sing. He loses his knowledge of song. This is what we call in general "karmic vision".

Many people think that when we speak of the human world, we are speaking of some particular world which is a highly developed level or something like that. Obviously the human world is different let's say from the animal world. But it is always the karmic vision of an individual. It does not mean that it is so developed a thing that you cannot lose it afterward. You must not forget, whenever we speak of the

anger, karmic vision

vision of a certain kind of being, that there is a karmic factor behind it. When we speak of human vision, the principal cause of that is pride.

Also we speak of heavens and hells. Many people speak of paradises and hells as if it were some kind of geography of actual places. Many people think that there is a particular place. This is not taught in Dzogchen. For Dzogchen it works out that you cannot say that there is no such thing as hell, because we have the cause. We have the wrath and anger. We pile up wrath and hatred more than anything. Everyday, everybody gets mad a certain number of times. We are continually piling up this cause. This is the most common accumulation. We accumulate it more than other things.

Many people have accumulated a lot of this wrath, this rage, and the cause becomes ever stronger. And this is why there are always more citizens of hell. In this case if I am in the hell vision, then for me the hell vision is real and concrete. At that moment if I was to do a research on where is this so-called human vision, I wouldn't find it. There is no place where they have that.

The same thing is true for us now in the human vision. If we now send out a lot of scientists and missiles and rockets to look for hell vision, they won't find it. We can calmly and with quite a confidence say "Hell doesn't exist". All of the karmic visions are like this. The cause is in we ourselves.

When we speak of performing purification, what we are purifying above all else is the cause. When you eliminate the cause through purification, then that particular vision no longer exists. It is very important to understand what we mean by karma when we speak of a karmic vision. Because many people think that karma is like a law, a rule, that is already written in the book. Tibetans in general are very accustomed to speaking about and thinking about karma. And when they've got a stomach ache they say "Ah it is my karma. What can you do about it?" Some accident happens and they say "Ah that is our karma. Let's accept it".

That is completely mistaken. It is simply not the case that karma is like that. If karma were like something already written down from the beginning, already pre-constituted from before, then there would be nothing to do but just wait and see what karma brings. But it is not like that. In principle, karma has its qualities right from the start. For example we say that murdering somebody is terrible. Naturally we think that is really heavy.

But to be complete karma, a perfect karma, three characteristics have to be completed. First you have to have the intention of murdering. That is to say, when there is the intention of murdering somebody, there is hatred or rage or something like that. And the second element is that you have to actually take action, perform an action. Entering into action could be direct or indirect. And at the end you have to be satisfied. That is to say, at the end you say "Wow, finally he is dead". And when you have these three complete, now you have established karma. And this is karma that will produce the consequence for which you have to pay.

This is what we are speaking of as a first cause, a first

primary & secondary causes

type of karma. For example if I had the intention "I want to kill that person" but I never entered into action, and I never did anything about it, but that person died by accident or in some way died and I thought to myself "Ah that's great. I am glad that he is dead", there are two of the three elements: the intention to knock him off and the satisfaction. But I did not participate either directly or indirectly in the doing of it. So it is not primary karma.

Or for example I have absolutely no intention of killing anybody but I perform some action and I kill somebody unintentionally, and afterward I discover that the guy that died was an enemy, and I feel good about it. I am satisfied with that. Here too there are two of the elements. But the first one, the intention, is missing and therefore this is not a completed perfect karma.

Thus there are many many types and variations of this kind and any of these could become karma. But none of them can become first or primary karma. When we say karma, that famous karma either good or bad, it always must have all three conditions completed.

Now for example, if I have suddenly unexpectedly a very bad sickness, and I say that "Ah this is my karma", it could be a primary karma. I am paying for something. But it is accompanied by secondary causes. Secondary causes means for example to feel bad, to have some illness, also depends on the climate, on my present physical condition, on my food, on many many factors that surround in the environment. These are the secondary factors of karma. If there is no secondary element present to mature the primary karma, even if I have a lot of negative karma, it cannot mature.

What does a practitioner do? First of all a practitioner must be aware. He mustn't be distracted. The important thing here is that being aware and not being distracted, one doesn't create the secondary causes for the primary causes that are in you. And you slowly slowly purify away the primary causes that are in you. If you have not been able to purify them all away, there is also a way of transforming the first cause, the primary karma, that is there and make it mature differently.

In sutric Buddhism for example it says that a Bodhisattva with a primary cause which should have taken him to suffering in hell was able to overcome it or go through it with merely a headache. This means that there is a method for transforming karma.

But according to the teachings of Dzogchen it is not even so necessary to transform these primary causes. The principal thing here is to purify away these primary causes and to be aware of, and be able to cope with, secondary causes. If one doesn't have an awareness of secondary causes, even if you have purified your primary causes, you are capable of creating and constructing new primary karma. Buddha says "What did you do in your past life? Examine that in your present body. What will happen to you in the future? Examine that in your present actions." Your present actions are the means by which you could be creating future karma.

Therefore all that which we call passions which you accumulate are the fundamental causes of what we call the six

6 lokas purification, Vajrasattva lokas. The six lokas mean like the human world, the animal world, the hell realm, and so forth. But many people might think "But aren't there more than six? We all have all our thoughts, all our problems, and we are all capable of accumulating cause." But we say six lokas because the principal passions that we tend to accumulate are six.

In this case, in the practice of Dzogchen, one of the first practices that we do is what is called the purification of the six lokas. When we understand what the motivation is for purifying these lokas, we do this purification above all through concentration. Purification is present in many different practices, above all in the practices that are called ngondro (sngon 'gro), a preparation. In all the different styles of ngondro preparation, there is always a practice of Vajrasattva for purification. Because in the Buddhist tantra, what is called the exterior tantra or for this example a style of kriya tantra, there are many many methods for purification usually with the visualization of a divinity, above all of Vajrasattva.

According to the teaching of Dzogchen, Vajrasattva is above all the manifestation, a presentation, of the sambhogakaya. Why is the visualization of Vajrasattva used above all rather than some other? Because as we have explained before, the individual exists just like the sun exists in the sky. And in the same sense when we say realization, if there exists realization, there exists the individual case. It does not mean that a hundred different individuals when they are realized all become like one big ball. Each individual manifests his particular wisdom, his individual wisdom and capacity.

For example we say that Vajrasattva has a particular wisdom for purification. We say that Avalokitesvara has the particular wisdom of compassion. We say that Manjushri particularly has this capacity of intelligence, and Amitayus for longevity. It all seems that realized beings are specialists, and then it seems ridiculous. There is a reason for this. The truth is that each totally realized individual possesses infinite wisdoms. It does not mean that Vajrasattva for example has more capacity for purification than, let's say, Buddha Shakyamuni, and that Buddha Shakyamuni has less compassion than Avalokitesvara. It doesn't mean anything like that. All of them possess the same capacities.

But their way of working is different. And that depends on the path they took before they became realized. It means that Avalokitesvara had many contacts on his path which involved a relationship of compassion. Vajrasattva for example had innumerable contacts with individuals that involved purification. When we visualize for example a given figure, it is simply a means of preparing ourselves to obtain, to receive, that particular capacity.

This is not only a characteristic of Buddhist tantra. In all religions, wherever you find the phenomenon of prayer, it works more or less like this. For example in the Catholic Church, they are always going to pray before the Virgin, the Madonna. Many people say they receive the grace of the Madonna. What it means is that the individual was involved, participated, and with great desire performed that prayer.

passivity, participation

This means that preparation to receive certain kinds of wisdom opens oneself.

In the practice of Dzogchen, we use this method for purification. And therefore there is the practice of Vajrasattva. But you have to remember that this is not a Dzogchen method. Here Dzogchen is making use of a method which actually belongs to the level of kriya yoga. Because in Dzogchen we don't limit ourselves in any way. We can make use of anything. Any type of practice which we find useful, we do it.

But it never is the case that a Dzogchen practitioner remains passive, just passively receiving. It is not that he says "I am a practitioner of Dzogchen, and without limits. I receive everything." He knows what he is doing. He knows what is useful to him. He knows if there is a rip in his clothes. He knows to put a patch on it. If there is no rip in his clothes, he would be crazy to put a patch on it. It is not the case that if the individual is passive, he simply receives. He is active about the teaching.

Many of us are used to being very passive, and people are used to saying "Ah there is a fantastic teacher who has just arrived in town, a famous one, a real wow looking at him. It is really amazing." Everybody runs. They all think that they are going to get a fantastic blessing out of this. And then they are going to wake up and then be realized. And many people really reason about this, justify this. This kind of proceeding we would describe as blind faith. If a person does not understand anything, somebody that lives in the forest and is kind of primitive, that is okay. He has this kind of idea.

But today people are a bit beyond that. They understand things when they are explained. And one cannot be that passive. And we know that in the teaching the Buddha himself explained "I teach you. But it is up to you to realize yourself". He never said "I give you a blessing, and I make you wake up and realize yourself." If the Buddha really had the possibility of awakening and realizing everybody, the first thing he would have done was to eliminate all the Indians, and India would be empty now. And moreover we know that the Buddha's compassion was limitless, and we might say the Buddha had infinite capacity. He could have eliminated India in one stroke, and there would be nobody left, the desert, because he had infinite compassion.

... In Tibetan it is called Chenrayzi (spyan ras gzigs). Chenrayzi means "never closes his eyes." His eyes are always open with his compassion to benefit all suffering beings. This is how committed he is. Why didn't he immediately do a miracle and awaken everybody? Evidently because it can't be done.

Therefore you see it really depends on each individual himself. Therefore the individual has to be active. It is not enough to be passive. Active means to practice, to try to understand. If you go to a master, the first thing is to have a principle. The first thing to do is try to understand that principle. What is this teaching about? What methods is this teaching offering to better oneself? When one asks like this, usually the teacher is able to respond, to give what you are asking for. Sometimes it seems a defect of the teachers that

calm, movement, rigpa

they don't give teachings.

But I wouldn't say that it is always the defect of the teachers. Many times it is a fault of he who follows, he who goes to hear. If a person just asked for a blessing, the teacher's response is to give him a blessing. If a person hasn't understood, then it is not sufficient to go and ask for a blessing. Then it would be good to have a little more understanding, to do a little more reading, know something more about the sense of the teaching so you know what questions to ask.

... at this point.

In Dzogchen we have to move more into migyowa, into the sense of the presence of movement. Because as we said earlier, the practice of Dzogchen goes very much at the level of energy. "Proceeding at the level of energy" includes all of the movements and activity that are part of daily life.

Let us say for example that I am now in a state of naypa, as calm as a quiet lake unmoved by any wind or current. And let's say that in this lake some little fish jump. But I am aware that all this movement belongs to me and to my state and my state of the lake itself is always calm. This is how I am in this shinay without an object.

But now I have to go a little bit into that which jumps. It is not that I am almost indifferent or that I am just a detached and distinct observer. Now I must find myself specifically in that which is jumping, with that which is moving. This is a way of having presence, being present.

If I don't have presence of mind in regard to these thoughts, one does not remain in the state of calm. But when one finds oneself being in the state of calm, one observes and notices.

In this way there is a way of being present that is a little different. And this is what we call precisely the state of rigpa. And here's where you will train yourself a bit. When you begin to be in this state a bit, then you begin to understand the difference between the state of shinay of which we speak in Dzogchen and the state of shinay that exists elsewhere.

This is just for beginning. This hasn't yet become Dzogchen. One has to train oneself a bit and continue a bit with this type of practice. When you have really arrived at this level easily, fluidly without efforts, then it is no longer necessary to just be inside a room or a house or an isolated quiet place.

Now there is another way of doing what we call "dissolving one's shinay". Because when we do the usual normal shinay, we say "Now I am in shinay", as if there were a door that had to be entered. Everyone says "I'm in the state of calm right now". This means that there is also a breaking away from it. It implies that when I am not there, I am not in the state of shinay. For that reason as I said earlier, you have also to find yourself in the state of movement.

And we have to dissolve this type of limit or boundary that "there is shinay, calm of mind" and "there is not shinay. Now I'm in shinay, and afterward I am not in shinay". It's as if this shinay were a carpet located here that has to be

dissolved.

And how do we do this? First of all, one must observe oneself - he who is in the state of shinay. The second thing is that you have to enter into action. Here a practitioner of Dzogchen has to do this a great deal of time. But this is a way of practicing. This is not something that you have to necessarily go up to the mountains to practice. Nor is it necessary for example to make a big retreat to do this. But you have to have a will and you have to have a presence of mind. And then you can do this practice.

The first thing is to have awareness of our existence, the body, the voice, the mind. What is the body doing normally? It performs good actions, bad actions, also neutral actions. But everybody considers that doing prostrations for example is doing good, right? But it is not that one was doing these prostrations in a state of shinay. Instead there one does those prostrations normally, that is normally concentrating on meaning well and having a good intention and doing them right.

Now we have said that we have relaxed our physical action and then we must take these actions to shinay. It is much easier to first of all do all positive things. It is much easier to do them considering them something good. It is a very simple thing to do a prostration. First of all we are in our location. I am in the state of shinay. Now if I do a prostration, the minimum, the first thing that I have to do is move quickly. Because I have to get up. Without getting up, how can I do prostration? To get up I have to begin moving my body. If I can do or not I move or not remain in shinay. If I lose my calm with the least movement, it means that my shinay is not so very precise.

For example, at minimum, remaining in this condition, I change where I am looking and how I am looking. When we do a visualization, you can notice that everybody closes his eyes. We close our eyes when we do a visualization because what you are actually seeing in front of you is an annoyance, an impediment. If for example a person is doing a visualization like finding himself within a sphere of different colors, a thigle it is called, and he visualizes this with his eyes open, if he is not very, very good at visualizing or able to visualize, he won't succeed. Because he will see this house, the walls and so forth. And this house is not a sphere of light. For this reason, unless someone is extremely skillful, it is easier to close one's eyes when doing visualization.

We usually when people say that somebody is doing meditation, you can look around and you usually see that all people shut their eyes. This means that somebody is doing visualization. This means there is something to visualize and one is trying not to be disturbed by what is outside.

In the practice of Dzogchen, from the beginning you are taught to have your eyes open. You don't close your eyes when you are doing meditation. It says in the Dzogchen text "If you do meditation, open your eyes because all that which is around us, whether pure or impure vision, is our own ornament." That means that one is aware of that which is. It is not that a vision can disturb me but I must be ruling this.

Also at the sutric level, there is a teaching, the

rainbow body, Upadesha

teaching of Phadampa, the great Indian master, who was in Tibet. There is a charming saying. He says to his disciple "Don't let yourself be conditioned by vision, but be concerned about attachment. Because attachment doesn't come from the vision which is outside, it comes from inside you". So if I am ruling this vision, then the vision itself is a way of progressing my practice. And thus in Dzogchen we say that vision is an ornament of one's self. So there is nothing to close one's eyes to, nothing to give up or to renounce or refuse. All things can be means on the path.

And the best outcome of this teaching is obtaining the body of light, the rainbow body. These two series of teachings, the Semde and the Longde, were introduced into Tibet by Vairocana who was a great master, one of the most important translators from Sanskrit into Tibetan, and also one of the best disciples of Padmasambhava who introduced Dzogchen into Tibet.

But this doesn't mean that all the tantras that were introduced into Tibet were translated from Sanskrit and that they came over from India. Many of the Dzogchen texts were translated and brought from the language of Odiyana, not from Sanskrit. Nowadays, many scholars say that they can't find various Dzogchen texts in Sanskrit and they are all amazed that they don't exist in Sanskrit. But there is nothing to be amazed about because they came from Odiyana, not from Sanskrit.

The third series of Dzogchen teachings is called Upadesha or manngagide (man ngag gi sde). But manngagide means that all these series mainly belong to the Upadesha. The Upadesha is like the summary of all the principal methods used. There are also many methods that come from the Anuyoga which are used. Also many Mahayoga methods are used in Upadesha. So you have to understand that the Upadesha is like a summary of all the different methods used. Upadesha is not like the main body of Dzogchen teachings. The Upadesha is like the Dzogchen treasure. But the house in which this treasure lies is the Semde teachings, and most of the practices which come from the Longde teachings.

In Tibetan tradition, it is very much the lineage of personal teachers. For example the Longchen Nyingthig (klong chen snying thig) is a particular teaching of the teacher jigmaylingpa ('jigs med gling pa), and it is very diffused and widespread in Tibet. Now for example if somebody says "Now I am receiving this teaching of Longchen Nyingthig", then somebody transmits the initiation and the explanation that are all in the text of the Longchen Nyingthig. And he would transmit it to somebody who at his turn transmits it. And there can be hundreds of people like this in a lineage.

For example, for what we call the Rinchen Terdzod (rin chen gter mdzod), rinchen means precious, and terdzod means treasure, a collection of treasure. It means all the terma texts which are discovered texts all put together. And thus these are teachings of all the various lineages.

If you have to give all these different initiations, it means you received all these initiations. You have to spend months giving all these initiations. This is like the characteristics that the traditional systems maintain of

transmission, guruyoga
getting all these initiations.

But many teachings in the tradition of Dzogchen are united. For example my teacher's characteristic way of teaching was that he would not make these divisions between texts. He would unite all the transmissions together whether be they the Semde, the Longde, or the Upadesha.

When you talk about transmitting the teachings, if the teaching has really been transmitted, there is only one way of really transmitting. Even if you do a hundred different transmissions, there is only one aim you are trying to get at. So if you do not know how to transmit, even if you do it a hundred times, it doesn't work out.

For example if you are asked "What tradition does a Dzogchen transmission belong to?", the answer is "the tradition of Dzogchen". It doesn't have to belong to some specified lineage or some tradition.

For example if you are practicing and you want to maintain the transmission, it is very important to practice the guruyoga. Now how should you practice the guruyoga? The form of the guruyoga has no importance. But the principle should be your awareness and knowledge as a union of all your teachers.

Now what does the union of your teachers mean? If you have had teachings from only one person, only one teacher, then there is no problem. But you have received teachings from ten different people, then you have ten different teachers. You can't have ten different manifestations in guruyoga. In general how do you do it? One gives main importance to one's tsaway lama (rtsa ba'i bla ma), root guru or root teacher, and less consideration for your other teachers. If you have that attitude, it means that you are not aware.

When you practice the guruyoga, you are not doing it to please your guru, your teacher. If you really understand the meaning of the guruyoga, if the teacher possesses the knowledge, the true meaning and function of the guruyoga, it then doesn't matter whether the disciple does it or not. But a teacher is aware that his student or disciple has to be aware that the transmission is important for his own progress. In this case the guruyoga is necessary.

Thus it is in your own interest to do the guruyoga. If it is not in the interest of the disciple to do the guruyoga, in that case you are practicing the guruyoga just because you feel friendly towards your teacher. The guruyoga helps you in the teaching. And you do it with the teachers who have helped in the teachings or who have taught you. Teaching is not only some kind of initiation and it is neither just transmission.

But it can be somebody who gave me the possibility of understanding something. It can be somebody who directly helps me or taught me something or somebody who indirectly did. So I do guruyoga with all beings with whom I have this kind of relationship, who have helped me, who have benefited me.

When you do guruyoga, what do you concentrate upon? We usually concentrate upon Padmasambhava. You have to be aware that it is like the union of all your teachers that is manifesting in the form of Padmasambhava. You mustn't think

Padmasambhava, guruyoga

"I am concentrating on Padmasambhava himself". Padmasambhava is very important, and also his Buddhist sanctimony is perhaps even more important.

But for myself I have received the transmissions and the teachings from my guru, my teacher. So for me the most important person is my own teacher, more important than Padmasambhava. You have to know this and have knowledge of this principle.

Without limiting yourself, you unite all your teachers in that manifestation. And this practice brings progress of the transmission and it also prevents obstacles from arising. It means that no problems are created by this transmission. If I have received a certain initiation from a given teacher, I automatically have promised something when I received it.

So for example if I have received a hundred different initiations, then I have made a hundred different promises. For example, when I take an initiation, I must also automatically promise that I will practice a certain mantra. Not only the reciting of the mantra, but many other things are promised. So how can somebody maintain all these different promises everyday? You can receive all these initiations, but it is not easy to maintain the promises you make when you take them. So what to do?

So when you want to maintain a transmission, the best thing to do is to practice the guruyoga, above all the guruyoga with the manifestation of the union of all your teachers. That is, if you really practice the guruyoga, then you can maintain all the different initiations you have received. And if you maintain all these transmissions, then you have great benefits, progress. But if you don't maintain the transmissions, then instead of being beneficial, it creates problems and obstacles.

As I said before, in the Dzogchen teaching what counts is the method that you use. The forms and figures are not important. It is not that I am criticizing, but in the tradition of the Sakyapa school, when they receive the initiation of Hevajra, they make a promise to recite the lamdu ?? which is a text about the union of the way. This text is about 60 pages long. Every day you are supposed to recite the 60 pages of text and this whole text is a visualization of Hevajra.

But naturally every day everybody is busy and has things to do. And above all the monks in the Tibetan monasteries have very much work to do. And the only reason they maintained it was not to break their promise. So all the monks would recite it every morning. Then it just became something automatic that you would recite without concentrating and visualizing. And at a certain point after reciting this text everyday, the tongue got used to it, and you could say it very easily. And you said it so quickly that in a half hour you were finished.

There is also another initiation of Hevajra which is called the initiation of the path. And when you receive this initiation you have to promise to recite it twice everyday. When I was in school and when I used to be in college, I received both of those initiations at different times. And I practiced that. I was reciting these texts for months and

guruyoga, transmission

months every day. It was very annoying. And when I couldn't do it I would get worried and upset because I hadn't recited it. Not only these but other initiations.

And thus I had a book that thick that I was supposed to practice everyday. And I was trying to recite these texts every single day, every single morning, until I met my guru. Because I would have been very upset if I had broken my promise.

But when I met my teacher, I then finally understood the true meaning of the guruyoga, and I also understood why one practices the guruyoga. I also understood that the guruyoga doesn't just depend on the words. You can do it in a very short way. You can do it the length of time that it takes to drink a cup of coffee or in an instant. It is enough to know the way to do it and have the will to do it. It means that you are present and that you are not distracted.

If you don't maintain the guruyoga, this slows down considerably your progress and practice. Let's say that we have knowledge of our own state of mind, and we enter into practice. But we need some methods or some help in developing the practice. And these means and methods are the transmission. When I have received the transmission of the teaching, and I receive a total transmission of Dzogchen, it is not important to divide the different types of Dzogchen.

We give the example that if you try to touch these two fingers together, it is very easy if you look at them with your eyes. But if you can't see your fingers, then it is not as easy. So what are these eyes? If we are not yet realized beings and we are trying to touch these two fingers and we don't yet have these eyes, then I need somebody to help me, to direct me. If I keep on doing that, then I will have to lift my right hand and someone who has eyes then helps me. Then it is easier and faster.

And in the same way, the intervention of the transmission helps you progress in this way. And it is in the same way that the protectors and the dakinis function. So the method is very important.

The method is the guruyoga. You mustn't think necessarily that the guruyoga also contains so many words. This book is like a summary of all the different types of Buddhist practices. But it is not Dzogchen practice. In this book there is a guruyoga. This guruyoga is in the style of Anuttara tantra.

You concentrate on the union of the teachers that manifest in the form of Padmasambhava in front of you. You concentrate on OM AH HUM as the body, voice and mind inside Padmasambhava, and you also concentrate on these three words OM AH HUM within yourself. Then you concentrate that rays of light travel from Padmasambhava to you. And thus you receive all the initiations of body, voice and mind one at a time. And then all three lights enter simultaneously. Thus you receive all the initiations together.

Now this is like a general step of guruyoga in all the different schools. It is characteristic of the Anuttara tantra. Then you concentrate the Padmasambhava vanishes into light and that the light finally vanishes into itself. So at the end, your state is united with, is, the state of the

fixation

teacher. Thus this is the final stage of the Anuttara tantra, the unification of the state of the disciple with the union of the teachers.

At the end you remain just in the presence of this state with the letter AH, nothing. And you recognize the presence of this state as the unification of the master and of your own state.

Now I will explain a bit continuing what I began yesterday on fixation of mind. Yesterday I did not explain how one's posture should be when doing fixation. It is the same as when you do yantra yoga. That is to say, that there are two ways of fixing: fixing with an object whatever it may be, or thereafter fixing without an object.

When you do fixation with an object the body must be controlled. In this case you must be in position as if you were doing breathing in yantra yoga. That is, it is important here that the body be controlled and kept precisely right. The back must be straight, and your eyes must be directed at the point of fixation in a stable way. There should be no effort in breathing, but the breathing should be little bit deep and natural.

Your thumb and the next to the last finger are holding around your knees. As you saw when doing yantra yoga, the thumb is held inside, with the significance that the thumb is connected to the next to the last finger. It is considered that there is a current of energy going through these points. When the circuit is closed the mind becomes calm. So when you do meditation in the Buddha position for example, we find that the thumbs united which is another way of achieving the same thing. When you close the hand around the knee, you force the thumb and the next to last finger by holding a little firmly there.

When you are doing fixation, what is it that you are seeking? The truth is that what you are seeking is to find calm. Because our mind is usually very agitated, and very disordered. Thus with this controlled position, you permit yourself to find calm. That is without struggling, at times even without doing fixations, it naturally comes about the mind is calm. That is to say, thoughts do not present themselves at that moment.

But at times it happens that there is a distraction. And now when you do fixation it becomes easier that such a state should arise. This is what is usually called shinay. Shinay means a calm state. All teachings point towards this. The truth is that this means a calm state not disturbed by thought.

Perhaps in the beginning an individual practicing continuous fixation for one minute for example may find a bit of calm. And then a moment later he is apt to be disturbed by thoughts. If he continues for a little longer, he will encounter the state of calm more and the mind will slow down.

The important thing at the beginning is you must not push and push yourself. It is very important to do it in little pieces, many times for brief periods. And then as you do it more and more often, and this state of calm presents itself more and more completely, you lengthen the period of time.

shinay, lhagtong

Normally whatever we are doing normally we usually continue to do it until it is no longer good. This is what we shouldn't do here. When you are doing this and you find a state of calm and it is just as it should be, then you should be aware enough to stop while you are ahead. At times it seems that everything is going fine. Then it seems as if everything is getting worse, going badly.

And for example you can see the situation where a day goes by, and by evening things are really going very poorly. And this way you can easily become a person who has tried many things many times, but has not ever practiced seriously. It is very important that this type of person continue with fixation with an object.

And he should alternate working with sound. That is to say, working with sound would be fixing on the HUM while sounding the HUM, or fixing on a letter AH while sounding the AH. Working this way slowly, slowly, the mind will slow down and the state of calm expand. And this is usually called shinay.

To do shinay you need a tranquil or quiet place and a limited period of time, a specific period of time for practice. Because shinay cannot be done in the middle of the street. Shinay is a practice to prepare you for meditation. You must never think that shinay is a principal practice. Yes in Sutric Buddhism for example much importance is given to shinay. They give much importance to it because for them shinay is virtually a primary practice.

But in Dzogchen it doesn't show up that much. Shinay, calm of mind, is only a preparation. When you have found this state of calm, if then thoughts arise or there is some happening or movement around in the environment, all this does not disturb if one is in this state of calm and knows how to continue it. This means that one is entered into the practice of shinay. It is not a natural or spontaneous shinay. This means that this is a shinay which you have achieved, made to happen.

Then going a little further, making more progress, when one finds himself even in the midst of great confusion, and when one is still capable of remaining in the state of shinay, if you are doing this, then this is what we call natural shinay. And then if you make still further progress, then no effort is required to be in shinay. At this point you no longer need to be in a particular position or dedicate a specific time to being in shinay, calm of mind.

When this arrives, we speak of as final shinay. This type of shinay means for example that there is a person at the center of a lake. Around him there is a great deal of movement, fishing swimming, birds flying, waves, and so forth. And that person has complete awareness of all the movement that is happening around him, but he is not in any way disturbed, because he finds himself in his position, in his state. Thus all thoughts, all movements, none of it, disturbs him.

From there in other traditions of teaching they begin to speak of lhagtong (lhag mthong). Lhagtong means that something manifests or presents itself, not just a state of calm, but something beyond it which is a movement like its own

calm, movement, rigpa

waves. For example a thought arises, or a vision appears. Whatever it is, it is a movement or a sensation, whether it be a physical or mental sensation. All this belongs at that moment what is called lhagton.

But in the teaching of Dzogchen, we use the distinction between shinay and lhagton only as a matter of explanation. But in practice, we don't actually distinguish the two things. We speak principally of the state of calm, and then there is a movement, gyowa (g.yo ba). Let us say that we are in a state of calm with no presence whatsoever of thought. It is like a calm lake and suddenly, unexpectedly, a thought arises. Even if it doesn't disturb one, one is aware that it is present. Let us say that in that calm lake a fish jumps. One is observing this fish jump, but it doesn't mean that one is disturbed by it. Thus without continuing the thought, it is as if one were observing the fish jump.

Naturally it must not become as if there were a subject and object, that is, two different things. Because if we give the example of the lake, we are thinking that the lake itself is our state of consciousness. And that which is jumping, the fish, also belongs to our state of consciousness. And this is what we call gyowa, that is, movement. If there is movement and one hasn't noticed it, as if I were detached from it, that means that I lack clarity.

This means that one must have presence of mind, and the movement must be noticed. This presence and noticing of whatever and anything that happens is what we call rigpa. Rigpa means presence in the sense of knowledge as to what is taking place. And rigpa means in the Dzogchen teaching the primordial state of awareness. We must distinguish that we speak of rigpa as the primordial state of awareness when one possesses this knowledge.

This is to say, one enters into the practice and one finds that this movement is the same as calm, the same as presence of mind when one doesn't differentiate them, when one is aware of all of them. This is rigpa. One doesn't make a separate analysis and treat them as different things. At this point the state of calm, the movement, and the awareness of movement and of calm, nay gyo shay ?? in Tibetan, is all one and the same thing. Meditation means that the practitioner must find himself in this state of the unity of all three.

In the example of the mirror which possesses its inherent capacity to reflect, its clarity and purity, is like the state of naypa, calm. All of the reflections are like the movement. Reflections can be pleasant or unpleasant. Being aware of these reflections without in any way being conditioned by them is the state of meditation, and this is what we call rigpa.

In the beginning when you are in the state of shinay, or calm of mind, at times people find themselves very much disturbed by thoughts. Instead of calming down, thoughts increase and become more numerous. Some practitioners become desperate over this quite quickly. And they say "Oh my goodness, I will never make it. I don't have the possibility of practicing." He might even feel that when he doesn't practice he is calmer.

But the reality is not that. Because when our minds are very disturbed, are not in a good condition, we don't notice

nyams, fixation without an object our thoughts. In that state when one puts things in order with the body is in proper position, breathing controlled, and therefore the mind calm, you notice more readily and precisely how your thoughts are arising and bubbling. You are actually noticing better.

We see a bit of water for example. When it gets very agitated and boils, in the water you don't see many fish present. The water is all muddied. When the water is calm, it becomes more clear and transparent, and it seems that there are more fish. Actually you are just seeing the rep... So even if it seems that by trying to calm the mind you are producing more thoughts, the truth is not there. It is just that you are noticing the frequency of thought with greater clarity.

Another thing that can happen is that many sensations may arise. For example for someone doing shinay there may arise waves of desperation or sadness. Or you can now have a sudden burst of what seems to be great happiness, and with no reason at all you start laughing. Or you may have a sudden impulse to leap up and jump about or scream or cry or something of the kind. It is very easy that these things can happen. And sometimes it happens that somebody begins to practice and after two days they do not want to do it anymore.

These are called nyams. Nyams means a type of sensation or vision which arises from doing practice. The nyam is not negative, nor is it super positive like some kind of miracle. It is simply a way our state manifests itself. But now you are doing certain practices and when you do the practices there is a response. It is very important to have awareness about the nyams. Otherwise the nyams become a factor which condition the person.

Someone says "What must I do if a nyam comes?" At times there is something specific to do about it. But it is not always necessary to do something. What is important is to be aware that this is something that happens and not to be conditioned by it. If one has awareness about the nyam, the nyam can become a positive means for making progress in practice. If you give great importance to the nyam or consider them something like a result while I am getting there and become attached to them, then it can become extremely negative.

Someone who has never practiced before must do this type of fixation and shinay at least for a week with considerable intensity, and after that, fixation without an object. In the case of fixation without an object, it is not important to do a great deal of precise sitting in position. Rather it is important to be very relaxed. One must have no effort, commitment, of any kind, particularly no effort on the part of the physical body.

If you are very used to the meditation position, and you can be in that position without making any effort at all, and it doesn't cost any effort, fine. Then you are in position. But if being in position costs you effort and attention, then don't be in it. In that case you try to find a physical position that doesn't disturb you or create any effort or tension on your part at all.

Now we have said that this is fixation with nothing to

fixation without an object

fix on, no specific object or fixation. Therefore you could look into space for example. If you are in the house, however, and cannot look into space and sky, it means that there is no particular place you are looking at. If you practice in the open it is better. Out of doors is better. In that case if you are out of doors you can look into the sky, into space. If it is the morning, look toward the west; if it is the afternoon, look towards the east. Do not be disturbed by the sun.

At midday, this practice is not done much. Not only this, but also fixation, is not particularly ideal at midday. Because practice should never be forced. And after awareness of your own physical body, you have to do it as and how you find yourself. In fact midday and midnight have been considered not ideal periods for fixation or meditation. If you are on a retreat for example, at those times of day, you can do some other types of practice. Or you can rest.

As far as fixation without an object goes the has no particular thing to think of. There is no specific place that you are directing the mind. In point of fact what you do is relax the mind. You relax the mind but you maintain awareness.

How do we explain what we mean by awareness? We know that the mind, whether we are dealing with a past, present, or future situation, is always judging and thinking and considering. And thus it is continuously accumulating actions and causes through intention. Therefore, now to relax the mind means to let the mind be freely. The same is true of the body. Let the body be. There is no particular requirement that you have to have a good intention, or a particular bad intention. You don't do anything. You just relax. Relax the body too, and let be what is. You let yourself breathe freely.

So with this fixation there is nothing precise. You just let be and with the eyes open. It is possible at that point to have the state presents at that moment in such a way that all three of the elements of which we spoke of, the calm, the movement, and the awareness of both are present and united.

There are many people who without spending a lot of time on fixation with an object can proceed directly to this type of fixation without an object. So it doesn't mean that it is obligatory that you spend a lot of days doing fixation with an object. Fixation with an object is only a preparation for fixation without an object.

When you do fixation without an object, if you don't immediately find this state of calm and a presence of mind and of movement, all united, or if you find that you have some particular difficulty, then you go back to doing much more work with fixation with an object. And if you still don't succeed well, then you have to practice a great deal of fixation with an object of sound.

The teaching of Dzogchen is not gradual. But if you don't succeed, then you have to be aware of not succeeding. Then you have to go back to preparation, and you have to know which preparation to make use of. But if you don't need that, if you succeed very well with fixation without an object, then you go right ahead doing that.

OM AH HUM, body, voice, mind

But you mustn't confuse here the intellectual concept and the actual practice. For example now while I am explaining, you are imagining and knowing what I am meaning and that is all. You are doing that with your intellect. But when you enter into the practice, that is completely another story.

If you never have eaten a piece of candy, you don't know what sweet means. Somebody can explain and explain it to you, and you can imagine what is meant by the term "sweet", but the difference between that type of knowledge and actually tasting something sweet is two different things, and it is very important to distinguish these two. If not, it is not going to be practice of Dzogchen. You have to try a bit of this type of shinay. This is also called shinay without an object. You could call it shinay ... but you cannot stop there.

There is still a simpler word like OM AH HUM. It symbolizes the body, the voice, and the mind, and it is after all the essence of mantra. There is no mantra more important than OM AH HUM. In this mantra are contained all of the transmission of mantric power. And this OM AH HUM is capable of placing a cause into existence. This is not only used in Dzogchen. But any type of Buddhist ritual uses the words OM AH HUM.

... But what is important is that you have presence of mind and are attentive to this consideration. Thus you see these six words are also important. If you don't know how to read them, they are here as the last words of the book, written in a sort of a pronouncing script a a ha sha sa ma. And on the front there is a mirror.

The mirror was used in olden times to look into your face. But today we have all these beautiful big & handsome glass mirrors everywhere. We don't need this type of mirror to look at our face. In origin this is actually a mirror. It is just that this mirror is made circular. It is also a little concave. This symbolizes the sphere. All things emerging and spreading from the void manifest themselves in spherical form.

We know that even a bubbles or little circles which you see in the light are all round. And when you see four points where there are three little bubbles, these correspond to our aggregates. These aggregates are what we call the five dhyani Buddhas.

Remember in principle we begin with the three vajras, the body, voice and mind. But you will find that here the position of these three is the opposite of the Anuttara tantra mirrors. You will find two on the outside and one on the inside in the normal form. Because that normal form is widely used in the Anuttara tantra, and above all in kriya tantra. And it is used above all for purification. In Dzogchen it is not.

In Dzogchen the melong is the means for symbolic transmission. Through the melong, one can transmit knowledge of the state of the individual and of the mind. Thus it is an important symbol. He who carries the melong means that he possesses this knowledge. And when one is aware of his melong, it gives help to one's presence of mind and helps keep one from being distracted. Because if you see the melong you don't have a different idea. It immediately gives that sense.

melong, transformation

And this way in which the little beads are placed, with the two not on the outside, but on the inside, means perfection. It means not that the things are expanding outward, but that everything is perfected in and of itself. Because in Dzogchen we say that the individual is the center of the universe. A center greater than this does not exist. Everything has been perfected within the individual himself. When one possesses this knowledge, one would find himself in this state. This is what we call Dzogchen.

Then man has become a Dzogchen man. It doesn't matter whether he has a particular costume or not. This is my explanation of the melong. There are also advanced practices where the melong is used as a means in practice. In any case that is not important to explain right now.

What is most important right now is what I explained to you today about shinay and how to do it. Those of you who are really interested in practice will have to make the effort to understand correctly. When you really understood, then it is not time to start jabbering about it, but to practice a little. Then you will understand why the melong is one of its functions, and what evolution, development, can come onto you personally, how it will manifest itself. Now I think that is enough for today.

Those of you who have studied Buddhist books, Buddhist traditions, should distinguish well when I speak to you of Dzogchen. You should distinguish Dzogchen from the other approaches that you know. Because you cannot judge the teaching of Dzogchen using the idea or criterion of other approaches. This doesn't mean that the other approaches aren't good or that Dzogchen is somehow better or different. No. It is not what I am saying.

But I explained this point very precisely yesterday, that all of the Anuttara tantras, that is, what is called the inner or superior tantras, involve or use the way of transformation. When we say the way of transformation, we use the principle of visualizing the divinity. And there is also concentration on the mandala. Because our condition possesses in general a subject and an object. Since we have this principle, also in our practice this same thing exists. When we speak of the way of transformation, that means that something is transformed into something else.

Thus for transformation, we begin first of all with the visualization of the divinity. Afterward there also is the reciting of mantra. And then at the end there are the practices which we can call interior practices which involve the channels, the chakras, the energies, and so forth in yoga. With all of these concepts one is brought to a level beyond concepts. Because the way of transformation does not mean that you become stuck on the way of transformation.

You know when we speak of the traditions of Buddhist tantra, in one school for example the ultimate point is what is called Mahamudra. Mahamudra is very well known. And it appears in all of the teachings that belong to the Anuttara tantra. Many people think that Mahamudra is somehow a specialty of the Kagyudpa school, and they interpret it in this manner.

mahamudra, self-liberation

But it is not in fact precisely so. Each of the four major schools in Tibet, the Nyingmapa, the Kagyudpa, the Sakyapa, and the Gelugpa, have their own particular interpretation, most specifically of the sutras. But when it comes to the tantras, more or less all of them are the same.

In the tantras, all of these four schools have the Anuttara tantra. Anuttara tantra reaches its ultimate stage precisely in what is called Mahamudra. You also find that Mahamudra is the ultimate stage in these other schools, the Gelugpa and Sakyapa and Nyingmapa.

Thus what does Mahamudra mean? Mahamudra means the ultimate phase of the Anuttara tantra. When we speak of Mahamudra, are we still on the path of transformation or not? If we are still on the path of transformation, then we don't speak exactly of Mahamudra. Mahamudra means "gone beyond the way of transformation". It means that you have arrived at your goal. Therefore what is called Mahamudra and the concept of Dzogchen are in this sense the same thing.

But you must not become confused and think that it means that the path is the same. Because it is not. Because when we speak of Mahamudra, the path is a gradual path. Because you cannot do Mahamudra without having done the visualization of the deity, the concentration on the mandala, and the recitation of the mantras. Because those are the fundamental basics for something like the Anuttara tantra.

The basic principle in Anuttara tantra transforming, also transforming our vision. Our impure vision is transformed into pure vision, into that dimension which is the mandala for instance. And this must result from, and mature through, practice. And that has to be very intense and detailed practice of visualization.

I will give an example. In the Sakyapa school a very famous master was called Anaisha (?). When Anaisha practiced Hevajra, it says in his biography that he spent three years just visualizing the third eye of Hevajra, just to visualize it perfectly. This implies that they give a great deal of importance to visualization. Naturally when one has completely matured and realized such a power of visualization, one obtains a great benefit. This is the way of proceeding on the path for Anuttara tantra.

But Dzogchen is not the path of transformation. The Dzogchen path is what is called self-liberation. Dzogchen proceeds on the basis from the very beginning of not limiting oneself. One must find oneself beyond or outside of all limits. Both the outlook or theory and the practice, all must be on this level.

For this reason Dzogchen is called non-gradual and there is nothing to visualize. Dzogchen does not give principal importance to something obligatory about visualization. But there are visualizations necessary to guide our mind. As I said before giving an example, if one must go to the state of clarity and purity of the mirror itself, the reflections in that mirror are necessary. But if one can find that state directly, then it is not necessary or obligatory to go to the reflections.

So there are many types of visualization that can be used, but in Dzogchen there is no creating through

anuyoga, atiyoga

visualizing. Visualization is only used to guide one toward the state. The way of Dzogchen from the beginning is to go through visualization and fixation to contemplation. You must not confuse another thing.

When you read many books you can find certain interpretations of Dzogchen from the Anuttara point of view. As I said earlier, Dzogchen has base for everything because Dzogchen does not live in itself. So there are many ways of interpreting it.

When the Nyingmapa school for example performs an analysis of the different levels of tantra, what they call Anuttara tantra is divided into three classes. They speak of Mahayoga, which means the entire group of practices in areas of Anuttara tantra which have as their ultimate phase what is called Mahamudra.

And there exists another level which is called Anuyoga, a series of tantras. Those practices too are based on visualizations of the divinities, etc. Naturally it is still the gradual path but these are tantras which speak of the ultimate phase not with the term Mahamudra. They call their ultimate phase Dzogchen.

Why do they call it Dzogchen? Because from the beginning they give knowledge and consideration to the individual based on the notion that the individual is self-perfected. When there is the conception that the individual is already perfected, then its ultimate phase is also called Dzogchen.

What is the difference when it comes to the way of practicing? Even if it is the gradual path, the visualization practice here does not proceed by a gradual method. For Anuyoga it is still necessary to visualize the divinity. It is also necessary to concentrate on the mandala. But here the concentration or visualization can be accomplished and be complete in a single instant. It is not like at the Mahayoga level where you go detail by detail by detail.

Here it is also necessary to practice mantra because they speak of the three vajras. They say the vajra of the body, the vajra of the voice, and the vajra of the mind. So the practice also proceeds on this level.

But when they speak of the ultimate phase which they call Dzogchen, above all in the analysis which is made in the Nyingmapa school, they call that Atiyoga. Atiyoga means Dzogchen. As I very clearly explained, what Anuyoga considers Atiyoga, and the viewpoint of Dzogchen itself, are two different things. It does not mean that the ultimate is different. The ultimate is always the same for all. It is not important if you call it Dzogchen or by some other name.

But the methods are different. In Dzogchen, given the principle and knowledge of self-liberation, what is taught right from the beginning is awareness and not distracting oneself and not limiting and so forth. And this is what you do right from the beginning.

And therefore in this case what you do at the beginning is something of the order of fixing the mind. More or less, to direct the mind towards where it must get and at the same time, you do purification.

And then you may do any of the other, or all of the other, secondary practices. Secondary practices means any

primary & secondary practices

practice, whatever practice. I give an example. In the Kagyudpa school for example, the six teachings of Naropa are widely known and widely taught. This is a kind of collection of the teachings which Naropa had from various lineages.

These practices all exist for Dzogchen. But they are all secondary. "Secondary" means if you need it, you use it. It is not obligatory. It is not necessarily necessary for you, and moreover, it depends a great deal on the individual, on the person.

For example if I personally feel very much like practicing tummo, the practice of the inner heat, it does not mean that in this case in Dzogchen there is no tummo. In Dzogchen, precisely different types of tummo are taught. But for Dzogchen that does not show up as the principal way. Because these practices that are based essentially on visualization are not the way of self-liberation. For this reason, they are utilized when utilized as secondary practices.

For Dzogchen, what is indispensable is its primary practices, and these are as simple as possible. We in Tibet are habituated to studying and practice, all being very closely involved with very complicated philosophy, above all in the monastic traditions, the traditions of the monastery. They go a great deal on the intellectual level. Clearly if you have to proceed on the intellectual level, the more elegant and complicated the demonstrations are the better. So if you go to read a book of the sutras, if you are not a scholar, you won't even understand what you are reading. Not that it was that difficult right from the start, but they were always utilizing this way of using elegant complicated demonstrations, and also showing how intellectual we are.

But this is not the principle of Dzogchen, but rather the principle of Dzogchen is the precise contrary. One must find the meaning of the teaching, the sense of it, expressed in the simplest possible way, in the simplest possible language.

I for example lived until I was 17 years old always in the monastic college. I studied a bit of all of the Buddhist philosophies. I understood how difficult philosophizing is, but I thought realization proceeds on that level.

But at the end I encountered another type of teacher, a master who had nothing to do with this type of intellectuality. I understood that all that is just a construction of intellect. All those years that I had studied formatively, I became well-informed as regards philosophy. But it was very far from realization and the practice. This is what I discovered.

And thus I received a very different type of teaching. I was expecting to receive teachings from that master as I had received from other masters. He didn't satisfy me because I was used to things being done, and seeing things done, in a different fashion. But after a bit of practice, I discovered that the truth is that. Thus my entire intellectual construction collapsed. Having this knowledge I tried to transmit it also for other people who were interested.

And then I tried to understand and to study the Dzogchen texts themselves. And I discovered that what I had studied before really does not come so close as I had imagined to the

anuyoga, ornament of state true teaching. That is, the official Dzogchen teaching in Tibet was always interpreted from the style or viewpoint of Anuyoga. But the true Dzogchen teaching was kept, in a certain sense, secret. Above all it was not ever taught at the monasteries.

When they spoke of giving Dzogchen teachings, they would rather give initiations, hundreds of initiations of long long ceremonies. That is the tradition. And that tradition is rather linked entirely with Anuyoga. But this is not truly Dzogchen. Because in Dzogchen it is not necessary that you proceed by way of initiation ceremony or formal ritual. As I said earlier, Dzogchen is space for everything. Also if you want to do ritual, there is nothing to criticize there. You can always do anything. But you should not consider that is Dzogchen. If you understand that way, then you are mistaken. So I say it was always that way in Tibet in the monasteries.

But it didn't just end there in Tibet. There were many many masters who lived very simply somewhere else near the monastery. They could be found for example in the mountains, and they could be found among the peasants, and they could be found among the nomads.

For example one of the most respected and worthy recent masters of Dzogchen was in the north of eastern Tibet. In the last years, many many masters and teachers went to him to receive teachings from him. My uncle who was a practitioner of Dzogchen also went to receive teachings from that master, and he was very famous. When my uncle got there, he said what he found was that this master lived in a nomad's tent with eleven children, his wife and lived with his animals like the nomads do. And there were a few disciples there also, living with him in the same fashion.

So there were many masters of this type who were living there in Tibet. Why do they live in this fashion? Because the principle of Dzogchen is not to detach yourself or escape from society. Because in Dzogchen the principle is not that you must renounce or give up something.

In Dzogchen man must find himself in his energies. We consider that whatever we find around us, impure vision or pure vision as it may be, belongs to us and is our energy. In the tantra of Dzogchen, it is said that our vision is an ornament of our state of consciousness. And in this case, vision means also our impure vision.

So our vision of what we see is not to be abandoned but to be found in our state. If someone says vision is our ornament and lets himself be conditioned by our vision, then he is no longer a practitioner of Dzogchen. Then you can say he is an ordinary person. And we usually live in that fashion. Very often we don't know that we are conditioned by the object. But the truth is that we are always conditioned.

But a practitioner of Dzogchen will find himself in his vision. And this means something like the clarity and purity of the melong, the mirror, which finds itself right in the reflections. As I said earlier, the reflections have no power to condition or alter the clarity and purity of the melong, the mirror, itself. But if you find yourself in the reflections, a number of reflections, then the reflections can give sensations of pleasure or displeasure.

practice, awareness of condition

Thus in the practice of Dzogchen, man must find himself in the energies which surround him, among them. Thus the practitioner must be ideal. "Ideal" means that the practitioner is able to utilize things around him, not renouncing things, but knowing how to use them instead.

Normally in our lives, there exists day and night with time for working, and time for eating. And this is always continuing to cycle. If we speak of doing a practice and somebody says for example "I go an hour a day into the center to practice" that means for 23 hours of the day, he doesn't do anything. One hour is obviously not enough to compensate for, or balance, 23 hours.

If we have many many heavy obstacles and impediments, it is not going to be possible to overcome that with a little bit of practice. He needs a better idea than that. You need to be able to know how to use your time in practice and as practice. If in a day, there are 24 hours, then you have to use 24 hours a day to practice. What is not ideal is when people then think that nothing is possible, because they think that method of practice consists of meditating in a closed room. Obviously you can't do that 24 hours a day.

But that though is already a mistake. When practice is considered in that fashion it is already limited. And moreover, it is as if you had to create something or other in your mind. That means that you really have not understood the meaning of the teaching. When you have really understood, then there is a way of using your time.

If you follow the path, you might say that the first thing is "let's go to fixation of the mind". Not that you are being taught that you have to do this fixation for all of your life. This is not what is being said. What is meant instead is that you do this fixation as a way of preparing yourself for practicing all of your daily life.

Many practices call for example for a bit of silence and a place that is quiet. But it doesn't mean that you have to always be like Milarepa in the cave. If you are like that, it is fine. It isn't easy and it isn't necessarily possible for you. In Tibet once upon a time, it was easy. If you were really capable of staying up on the mountain in a cave, the people were full of faith. Everybody down would say that all the way up there is a great practitioner, and tomorrow they would bring cheese and they might bring some butter and barley. There was no problem of eating. You would always receive. If conditions are really like that and you want to practice, it is not so bad eh?

But today this is not how it works. And moreover the principle of the Dzogchen teaching is that man must be aware. If I am aware, it means that I am aware also of what the condition of other people is. It doesn't correspond if I am completely disposed to practice and that is fine with me, if it is not fine with the other people. Awareness means that what goes for me must also go well with others. It means that the benefits that I am enjoying, I must also seek to give that space and opportunity to others. If I make myself a monk, and my mother and father send me money, it is not very correct.

And any practices that are carried out on this level are not particularly correct. I am saying that they are not

missionaries

correct from the Dzogchen way of seeing things. It doesn't mean that it is not correct if other traditions proceed in that fashion. If I don't make this precise, somebody might think that I was criticizing. So you mustn't confuse the Dzogchen teaching with other teachings.

For example other teachings do what is called "spreading the Buddhist teachings". Thus they also do a kind of propaganda. They do things in a certain sense in missionary style. They don't see that as negative because they say "Many people don't know the teachings, don't have the possibility to get near the teachings. You have to give them that possibility." That is the principle going on at that level.

Instead, in the Dzogchen teachings, that is negative. It doesn't mean that the Dzogchen criticizes the others. It means that the Dzogchen teaching doesn't proceed in that way. If somebody says "I am following the Dzogchen teachings" and goes at that level, then he has got it all backwards.

Why do we consider ourselves so contrary to missionaries? Because our principle is awareness which includes respecting others. When we say a person is interested in the Dzogchen teaching, it is considered that this never can take place without a primary karmic cause. Many people think it happens by accident, but that accident is the cause. So there is a principle at work in that person.

For example, you people are here right now. We didn't know each other until yesterday. We are speaking about the teaching of Dzogchen. Let's say it just happened that way. But the fact that it happened that way is itself the precise cause. Because it is not that easy to encounter, to meet, the Dzogchen teaching. So when you know this principle, then it is not necessary to go off into spreading and propaganda. There always exists the necessary possibility.

Dzogchen teaching does not stay at the level of form. It isn't stuck in tradition. It doesn't even remain stuck at the name. In Tibetan we call it "Dzogchen". It was given this name. But if there is another name for it, that is fine. That makes no difference. But if someone has not understood truly, has not gotten the transmission, or has not understood its sense, its meaning, even if it was called something better than Dzogchen, like "double Dzogchen", it would not make any difference. So the name has no importance.

In the tradition of each and every school, they have their way of preserving or defending their school. Because they have their tradition. Their tradition is like their base, and they proceed to defend it. In Dzogchen we do not have this. In Dzogchen we try to help you understand that this is negative. It is a way of conditioning those people. That is valid not only for other teachings but for Dzogchen itself.

I give an example. A teacher of Dzogchen like my master for example says "I teach you this but you must not be conditioned by what I am teaching you". What does that mean? It means that "What I am teaching you is a means for you to awaken, wake up to yourself, and go outside any limits." If it doesn't work that way, and it doesn't have this function, then the Dzogchen is not at work. Then Dzogchen is just like something else. You can easily understand this.

secrecy, propaganda

For example in the Dzogchen teachings there exists many series of teachings. There are many many independent tantras. And each of these has its own way of explaining. But there has never been a Dzogchen school or sect. Dzogchen is found principally in the Nyingmapa school because Nyingmapa means the "oldest tradition" and Dzogchen is one of the oldest teachings that there is in Tibet. Naturally there are works to be found in the oldest traditions.

But Dzogchen is never limited. It exists also in the other schools, above all for example in the Kagyudpa school in which it is very widespread. There were many many famous Dzogchen masters among the Kagyudpa. But the same is true for the Sakyapa, and also the Gelugpa where many masters were in fact practitioners of Dzogchen.

But Dzogchen could never be applied officially in the monasteries, and they all called it a very very secret teaching. Why did they say this? Because in Tibet those teachings which were considered secret and important in highest parts of tantrism were the Anuttara tantras. In the Anuttara tantra there were many practices and many teachings that you can't publicly teach. That was called secret. And even if you don't keep the secret, for example a certain mantra, it doesn't work out if you don't keep the secret. So there is an actual reason to keep the secret.

Anuttara tantra is very much superior to the exterior tantras, and when we speak of Dzogchen, Dzogchen was officially again higher than the level of Anuttara tantra. Therefore automatically Dzogchen was considered super-secret.

But Dzogchen's way of being secret is completely otherwise. Dzogchen is secret not because of something you cannot say publicly. But the reason for Dzogchen being a secret, honestly speaking, is the fear which the monastic institution had of it. Because Buddhist teachings in general are all based on karma and all based on the law of good and evil. In Dzogchen, this just doesn't show. So if a person isn't prepared for this, they felt they would be harmed by it, and it could be very dangerous. Therefore, better to hide it.

And also, in Dzogchen says that it is not perfect to spread the word, to propagandize. From Dzogchen's point of view, spreading the word and publicizing, propagandizing, means not to respect the other person's point of view. And Dzogchen doesn't accept the way of doing things which is identified with organization. Organization and the creation of hierarchies and ranks means to limit and condition people.

All of this was contrary to the monasteries. In the monastery, you have to have a high, high throne and then you need a second throne a little lower. You need people of a very high level to be honored most highly, and the secondary people to be honored a little bit less.

All of you know that in Tibet, we have types of people like the Dalai Lama, Karmapa, and so forth and they were all of them, masters, teachers of the Chinese emperors. And thus the Chinese emperors showed them honor by giving them a lot of important titles. And monasteries kept the super-important titles.

But that of course has nothing whatsoever to do with the teachings. But it entered into the tradition in this way. At

monasteries, practice

this point what do you do with a teaching like Dzogchen? If somebody was to start teaching something like Dzogchen publicly in the monastery, it means "make the throne collapse". It means "Make the whole organization collapse". It means a kind of revolution, and they are afraid.

Monasteries don't want that kind of thing and therefore he who is really interested in Dzogchen practice, including a monk living in the monastery, lives up on the mountains or goes to become a peasant.

Because in the Dzogchen teaching there is nothing to be seen externally. There is no particular costume. There is no particular way of living that says "You've got to do this. You mustn't do this". All there is, is awareness. You utilize awareness at any moment. For this reason, masters of this type live simply.

But now our conditions are a little different. We won't speak of them here. But even in Tibet and India, if you want to speak a bit more openly about Dzogchen, they are not so afraid. Oh, maybe someone attacks you a bit, but that is not important. But above all, in my opinion, occidental people are exactly adaptive to a teaching like Dzogchen, because it is no longer possible to do all those things. And Dzogchen give a help. It helps you exactly with how to practice in daily life. This is how the Dzogchen teaching must be.

What shall we do? Should I continue? Are you feeling tired. Would you like to take a break? A ten minute break, and we will start again. We will explain a bit of semzin, a kind of practice.

Normally in the Dzogchen teaching, it is very important to be well-informed before practicing. Because many people after practicing haven't understood why it should be done. That means they were not informed well beforehand. Somebody says "Let's go to a restaurant". Naturally the concept is in order to eat. When we have arrived at the restaurant, somebody says "Why have we come here?" It begins to be ridiculous.

And this is why certain things become mere dogma. It mustn't become dogma. Nor must practice be something based just on faith. The person must know where he is going. He must have awareness towards the teaching. This is why, before practicing, it is useful to explain extremely carefully and well. This is why one understands first why one is practicing. And then one practices. Now since I have chattered enough, let's begin to practice a little.

In the practice of Dzogchen, the first thing is the coordination of body, voice and mind. There is practice of the body. There is practice of the voice. There is practice of the mind. These are like a preparation. But what does preparation mean at bottom?

As we have said, practice of Dzogchen means that one finds himself, or tries to find oneself, in the state of clarity and purity of the mirror itself. This is how you understand the direction in which to go. In this case, you understand that the purity and the clarity of the melong, the mirror, represent the primordial state of the individual and the reflections, whether they are beautiful or ugly, represent the mind.

vajra position

Therefore it is necessary to distinguish very clearly these two things. When one distinguishes these two things well, then there is a possibility of finding yourself in the state of clarity and purity. For this reason we do practice of the body, of the voice, of the mind.

The practice of the body is the vajra position. You take a position physically. For many people it is easy. For many people it is not easy. For those of you who find it difficult to do, you can do the position near or against the wall, resting your back against the wall.

Now I am going to show you the position. Your feet are like this. Your legs are thrown wide apart like thus. Your two hands are put together in this way, and they are put above your head like so. But they must not rest on the head. And the two hands must be closed well, not open, but flat against each other. And you remain like this. And you concentrate on yourself as a vajra off which are coming flames. With this sense of the flaming vajra present, you remain as long as possible like that.

And when you are tired, you put your feet down like this. But you continue with the hands above your head in this position as long as possible. And when you are tired, then you extend the legs and you extend yourself. You lie flat and relax. At that point everything is relaxed, body, voice, everything. After awhile you repeat it.

That position is very tiring. But the intention of this position is to be tired. You have to stay in it until you are tired. When you are really wiped out and can't really make it anymore, then you relax. In that moment of relaxation, there is no presence of thinking. If there is no presence of thoughts, there is no presence of mind.

Having had this knowledge, later when you are fixing the mind, it becomes much easier. That's a vajra and you can see your arms are in that form, and then your legs are in that form. In a sense you are that form. This is called a five-pointed vajra. This is a vajra which is characteristic of the Anuttara tantra. It signifies the five Dhyani Buddhas, and the base of it is like the five passions or the five aggregates which are manifesting themselves as the five Dhyani Buddhas.

Instead in Dzogchen, the vajra that you concentrate on is the vajra with three points. It doesn't have these two additional ones. There is just the central one and the two side ones. Why three? Because as I said this morning, the principle of the Dzogchen teaching is the base, the way, and the fruit. These three are the perfection of the individual.

When we say the base, then we are speaking of the essence, nature, and energy which are also three. When we speak of the way or the path, we speak of tawa or outlook, gumpa or meditation, and attitude. These again are three and mustn't be lacking. When we speak of the fruit, the way that these three manifest themselves is the fruit of it. When we spoke of the base, we said they were the essence, nature and energy. Now when they manifest as the fruit, they manifest as dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya. It is always based on three. And thus what we concentrate on is the three-pointed vajra.

practice of the voice

You see yourself as that vajra with flames coming forth. When you just do this body practice only, then train yourself for awhile. But it is not that you do it and then you are done with it as a preparatory phase as on the gradual path. That is not how it is here. It is very useful to continue also when you are doing certain types of fixation and meditation.

If I am doing a fixation and I find myself very confused or my mind very agitated, it is very valuable at such a moment to drop the fixation and do a bit of this vajra position. After I have made myself tired doing it two or three times, then I rebegin that fixation of mine and it is very easy. Now you can see what the direct immediate advantage is. This we call the practice of the body.

After that there is the practice of the voice. When we say the voice, we also mean by that one's breathing. And therefore we also mean your physical energy, because these are all linked together. Now for the practice of the voice, the principal practice of the voice, you must concentrate on the word HUM.

In the practice of Dzogchen we utilize to a great extent two sounds, the sound AH and the sound HUM. Because these two sounds are what we call neutral sounds. Neutral sound means the sound governs all. For example if we strike an object, for example when we go inside an airplane, we always hear HUM. HUM is the sound linked to breathing. You can't sound it without using your breath. In this case, if you know the word HUM, you concentrate on it at the center of your body.

In general, we speak of the three words OM AH HUM as the three words of the vajra. That means the vajra of the body, of the voice, and of the mind. Now HUM represents the mind. It also has a color. You can concentrate on the white OM, the red AH, the blue HUM.

Why a white OM, red AH, blue HUM? Because we usually also in the concentration of yantra yoga, or in all types of Anuttara tantra, when you concentrate on the central energy channel and the lunar channel and the solar channel, there is a white channel, a red channel and the central channel is blue. And this is the same. These are the symbols of the body, the voice, and the mind.

When we say the solar, the sun channel, we're speaking of material and concrete things. And in the tantras, it is also said that on the solar side are the methods. What does method mean? It could be a concentration on the divinity, or it could be a concentration on the channel, or a mandala, or all the colors that are involved, and whatever. Thus that side is represented as white.

Instead, the red, the energies, ... we speak of that as the voice, because voice is nothing that you can see, but something that works. For example, when we speak of the voice, you can't see the voice because it is not material, but you can hear. One person will be talking and the other one can be understanding. It works. Whereas the body you can see. You can see, can even touch a hand. So the two things are a little different.

Then there is the mind. The mind is this blue. Blue means profoundness. When we see something empty like the sky,

practice of the voice

it has just a blue color. The primordial state of the mind of the individual is represented by this blue HUM.

Therefore when we do this practice of the voice above all, we concentrate on this word and sound it. The first thing that you concentrate on is the presence of this word at the center. What does presence mean? We look at this image. After you have looked well at it, you close your eyes. It is immediately present to you what it looks like. That is the way we do the seeing. So you try to see and find this word at your center.

Many people find it easy to do such a vision. But others have a difficulty seeing. Some might say "I feel it but I don't see it". Then it is fine. It is not important whether you see it or not. If you can feel it there, it is sufficient.

You concentrate well on this HUM and gently, gently, you begin to sound HUM. The sound of the HUM has to ignite your nostrils and your mouth together. First the sound comes out lightly and then you strengthen and strengthen it. In the moment that you are sounding it, you have to have the presence of this visualized HUM here.

For many many practices we utilize these words. Because when we see the word, we know what the sound is. When you see the HUM, you know that it is called HUM. And this means respiration, the breathing, and the sound that you are hearing in your ears, and the mind which is symbolized, and that which is concentrating, are all united at this HUM.

Thus slowly, slowly, you sound it. Let's say you sound it three or four times. And when you stop sounding it, inhale without worrying about it. And then after three or four times then you concentrate that from this central HUM are emerging many many HUMs, as if it were sending out rays. And you keep sounding the HUM, and these HUMs are coming out.

And these HUMs are eliminating everything. What does that mean? If I am here and I am sounding HUM, everything that is present to my mind, the houses, the walls, is being eliminated, being replaced by HUMs. Don't worry about it. After you practice, you are still there. This is a way of utilizing practice too to go beyond or overcome certain attachments. You repeat a bit of this when you inhale.

When you inhale, all these HUMs which you have been sending out, condense back into the central HUM. Once again you sound the HUM, and they emerge in all directions. They radiate forth. Once again you reunite all of them, inhaling. This is called trodu ('phro 'du), to radiate out and return. You do this for five, six times.

And then if you feel very much the presence of your physical body, now from the HUM you can radiate out HUMs and then from these HUMs, you can radiate out further tinier HUMs and further tinier HUMs. And these can eliminate everything that is physical, so that nothing of the material world remains. Even if your physical body remains, it is transparent and permeable and not able to block anything. It is penetrated by all of these HUMs. Once again you inhale and exhale once more sounding the HUM.

This is the principal practice of the HUM for the voice. Then there are other methods. it is important to do these two

purification, eating meat
methods as subject and as ...

But simply you can do a mantra and with it you wash yourself. And this helps very much with purification and it also helps your intelligence. And sometimes it helps a great with sickness. And this is very very simple and there is almost always time enough for it.

Some people while they're taking a shower sing for example. Some people don't say anything. If we want to, we can use that time to say a mantra. If you don't know any other mantra for this purpose, you can use for example the Vajrasattva mantra, the 100 syllable mantra. If you don't know this, you can use a very short OM Vajra Sattva HUM for example.

If you know it, it's best to use the mantra that's precisely meant for purification with water, and there is a mantra. For those of you who are interested, afterward I can write out a copy and you can copy it. It's very useful for purification.

And the another thing, during the day there is always time to eat. When you eat try not to eat with indifference or unconcern or disregard. Try to be present, not distracted. And in regard to what you're eating you place a cause. We talked yesterday about eating meat for example. Hindus and Buddhists don't eat meat for example. Not because they are disgusted by meat. That is not the reason. But they are aware that to eat meat implies killing animals. So it's disturbing and harmful to animals. You were touching one of the bases of compassion. Naturally that's a very good action. There is a sutra that speaks at very great length of the consequences of eating meat. If you read this a couple of times you feel immediately like renouncing meat. The truth is like that.

But there are many practitioners who eat meat, and there is a way of eating meat. You don't eat with disregard, with indifference. This is an important point if you eat meat. You try to place a precise cause into existence. "To place a cause" means if he is a practitioner he finds himself on the path. "Being on the path" means that you are going to arrive somewhere. You are going somewhere. This somewhere is total realization. When you are realized, you'll manifest your wisdom. Who will receive that wisdom? Those who first receive your wisdom will be those beings with whom you have had a good relationship. Secondly all those beings with whom you've had a bad relationship. Thus whether it's been a good relationship or a bad relationship, it'll be all those with whom you have had contact. And when you are a realized being, there will be advantage for all of them. A practitioner prefers to have a good relationship, to put a good action into his relationship, with a being rather than a bad one.

For this reason when you eat, if you eat meat, you eat with awareness and you try to place a precise cause into existence. In this way you guarantee that for the being you've eaten, there will be an end to its transmigration and suffering. That doesn't mean that it's immediately going to be realized. Let's not even speak of that animal. Our intention isn't that it be immediately realized. Let's be

eating meat, awareness

aware of eating meat. In the case of meat it's obvious that there was a harm or disturbance to beings.

But whenever you eat, indirectly there is harm and damage done to beings, even when we eat a piece of bread. For that piece of bread to be produced, we make damage to innumerable tiny beings. Thus for this reason it's best to be aware.

In one of the sutras of Buddhism, an Arhat monk asks the Buddha a question. "Arhat" means that he is at a certain level of realization. He is able to see more than our eyes can see. He looked into the water and he saw innumerable living cells, and he asked the Buddha "How can I drink? How must I proceed if I want to drink water?" And Buddha responded saying "Bring a sieve and try to get rid of that which you can, as many of these beings as you can". And for this reason all Buddhist monks carry a little string or a sieve made of cotton. This is an example.

There are always consequences to every action, and this is true with regard to drinking, as regards wine, liquor and so forth. Many many traditions of the teaching say "You mustn't drink". But when we speak of tantra, normally many people think in tantra you can drink. It's not exactly like that.

In tantra there is a saying "Meat is eaten by he who has compassion. Alcohol is drunk by he who keeps to his vows". Whereas it doesn't say "You mustn't drink". There is another part of the same tantra which says "A tantric practitioner who gets drunk will suffer hell vision". This means he mustn't become drunk.

What does this really mean? In truth it means awareness. One must be aware. When you possess awareness, and your awareness is present here and now, you can do whatever you wish. Thus in the Dzogchen teaching one of the principal concerns in daily life, and above all in our attitude and our behavior, is awareness and having one's awareness present in the moment.

And if somebody says "It's sufficient to be aware", you have to remember that awareness belongs to the reflection. Awareness does not yet belong to the clarity and purity of the mirror itself. Realization means that one must find himself in the state of the mirror itself, and not living in the reflections. Reflections are always a manifestation of qualifications or qualities if one is living in the state of the mirror.

This means you can't just stop at awareness. You have to go beyond that into dissolving shinay. And then carry this shinay, this calm of mind, into action. And then one must unite shinay, calm of mind, and dissolved shinay so there is no longer a difference or a duality. In the teaching of Dzogchen as I said earlier, there are many many volumes but it's true conclusion can be stated in very few words.

I'll give one example. One of the principal tantras of the Semde section of Dzogchen is called the Kunjed Gyalpo. The essence, if you will, of the Kunjed Gyalpo is a chapter within this tantra. Within this chapter there is what is called the six verses of the vajra.

And there is a tantra translated into Tibetan by Vairocana which is considered to be the first tantra which was

6 vajra verses

translated. And it is a kind of good luck omen. It is called the rigpay khujug (??). Rigpa you will remember is the primordial state of consciousness and khujug means the cuckoo bird. The cuckoo bird is a sign of spring. So that means at that moment the flowers grow and nature bursts forth, and this is how this tantra is entitled. But the essence or principal point of this tantra also is six verses. They are the same six verses as the essence of the Kunjed Gyalpo. And then there is another tantra of the Longde series, a very famous tantra. its essence and its conclusion is six verses, the same six verses. Thus different tantras confirm these same six verses as the essence of Dzogchen.

What were these six verses? It is not easy to understand, not very clear. But they can really be easily understood if one has truly entered into the practice.

The first verse says non-dualism, non-dualism as regards all appearances and all that which exists. Non-dualism: there are many many explanations on this point. It could be non-dualism between subject and object, good and evil, method and void, what is called shunyata, void, and clarity, what could be called sensation and it's essential emptiness, what could be called duality between relative and absolute, what can be called shinay, the state of calm, and lhagtong, it's appearance and recognition, nyamzhag mnyam bzahag ??), the state of being in the state and continuing there in meditation and jaythob (rjes thob) considered its opposite which is to leave meditation and return to action, what's called transmigration and nirvana, what could be called desire and hope and what could be called worry and fear. And all these contrasts which are found on the level of dualism. And so this means beyond all that. This is the first verse and its conclusion. Beyond all dualism.

And there is a second verse: Even if discrete and different things appear separately and distinctly, their nature isn't something beyond the object itself. It means that you mustn't proceed to deny logically. All things are merely appearances. It doesn't mean that there is what exists or appears to exist, and somewhere beyond that there is void. If you say the cup is empty, the void is in the cup. The emptiness and the cup are one thing. They are the same. You can't say this material cup is relative and in absolute is really empty. Not only in real terms, but not even at the philosophical level of justification or reasoning, can you make that distinction.

In Buddhist philosophy the way of seeing, or the outlook, of Nagarjuna is best considered or best liked. Nagarjuna says "I make no affirmations. I'm innocent." Because when there is an affirmation there is always a negation as well. And thus sometimes when there were arguments and discussions with Nagarjuna, he would say "It's not true this or that" because they would say "Your own saying that you make no affirmations is an affirmation".

Logically that's true, but the consequence would have to be that one would just shut his mouth and not say anything. And then Nagarjuna couldn't say anything. But if you go to a level of practice, it's rather true. When you affirm, even if you are affirming non-affirmation, there is still something

6 vajra verses

there to be denied. So there is no way of proceeding other than not saying anything. Thus appearances which present themselves all seem true, but that very appearance, that which manifests, is also manifesting emptiness. And this is the essence or conclusion of the second verse.

Then there is the third verse. There is a word jizhinpa (ji bzhin pa). This means "as is". "As is" means in Dzogchen an individual is perfected from the beginning. There is nothing to perfect or improve. As is. Only if you don't have this knowledge and you are alienated from this knowledge of the state, we call this an obstacle. This so-called jizhinpa doesn't have to be affirmed "as is". This is the third verse.

Now there is the fourth. "It manifests in all ways". This means an individual possesses, or consists of, five aggregates. He has his elements. He uses all those things. One of which for example is his physical body, and all this manifests through his energy. And there are three things that can be said about this energy of all manifest things.

One type of energy is called dang (gdangs). No translation. And if you were to translate all three words they all translate "energy" and yet they are three different words describing three different modes of manifestation. Dang means an energy like the condition or situation as it is.

When we say dharmakaya, it really means "the essence". This essence also has its way of working, but its way of working has not yet manifested itself. Though it has not yet manifested itself, it always possesses this capacity, this possibility. Take the example of the mirror. In the mirror is its clarity and purity. That is its capacity. When this capacity exists, if an object happens to be in front of it, it is immediately ready to reflect. It means it has that capacity. But if this melong, this mirror, does not have before it some object or if it finds itself in the darkness for example, it has that capacity but the capacity is simply there, latent. The capacity is inherent in the mirror. In this case what do we call this capacity? We call it in Tibetan dang.

Then there is another way in which capacity exists, when an object is reflected in the mirror. When I speak of the mirror, the melong, you must think that the melong is the subject, the individual. You have to think our state is mirror. In the mirror all things are reflected. You can see these reflections in the mirror. This manifestation of reflection is what we can call manifesting itself subjectively in the mirror. It shows from the mirror. This type of energy we call rolpa in Tibetan.

And then there is another way in which energy manifests itself. Take for example a crystal which has been cut so that it has many faces. This crystal is found in the sun and it reflects out all kinds of colors. These colors which it reflects out are not like reflections in the mirror. They are visible out there. It shows many colors which are objectively manifested. They are out there. That is to say, from the crystal they are projected out when the light hits it. This way of manifesting of energy we call tsal (rtsal).

Thus there exist three modalities in which energy

6 vajra verses

manifests. Through all three of these types of energy, all things manifest. This means also in regard to us that we are surrounded by pure vision, impure vision, material, immaterial, that which is. And all that in truth is our own energy which is manifesting itself in one of these three ways. This and that is all our energy. This is one of the verses.

Then there is the fifth verse, which is one of the most interesting. It says "It is finished. Therefore get away from the diseases of commitment". The words are exactly like that. What does it mean? What is finished? Because a teaching which isn't Dzogchen, like the tantra, like the sutra, or other traditions, all have a concept of doing something to get to realization. Many of these traditions also have a concept of realization which is something you construct.

In Dzogchen is there or is there not this? There is not. It is finished. How is it finished? Because from the beginning the individual is perfected. Because there is no such thing as an individual in the primordial state who is not perfected. Therefore "Let go of the sickness, the disease, of commitment." This means that if you really put a commitment, an engagement into practice, it means that that engagement itself becomes an obstacle.

But what does commitment mean here? Commitment means that there is something I've got to do. When there is something I've got to do, it means there is a concept of something. It doesn't mean that there is not commitment, that is, that one must be distracted. Somebody says "I have nothing to be done. I'm Dzogchen. I have nothing to bother about". That's not what I'm talking about.

In Dzogchen there is nothing to do and one must not be distracted. It's very easy and yet is not so easy. A little child, a baby, that doesn't really know how to govern itself, it's very easy for it to live because its parents govern it. But a little baby who becomes responsible for itself might have a few more difficulties. It's a bit like that. The practice of Dzogchen is not governed by any external factor. But Dzogchen makes you understand, and gives you the responsibility for yourself. So there is nothing in particular to be done or got to and you must not distract yourself.

We have some 60 odd texts of Dzogchen, but if we go from one to another we won't find a single statement in any of them which says that we must behave in such a way, must not behave in another way, giving rules and regulations to obey like in the moral code of Buddhism. It doesn't mean that Dzogchen doesn't know how to teach rules.

But Dzogchen teaches rules of awareness, because there is no point being conditioned by what is outside you. If I am one who respects a rule that comes to me from outside, that means that I am a slave of that law. In this case the best thing is one's own awareness. If I had my own awareness, then there is no need or requirement that I be constrained or obliged by a law.

Moreover, no rule ever perfectly fits the specifics of time. A law that is excellent for Tibetans may be completely wrong for Americans. The same is true of attitudes. Certain

rules, awareness, secondary causes kinds of behavior that Tibetans considered excellent may be damaging for Americans, so there is nothing concrete and external that must be obeyed. And therefore you must very well and carefully construct your awareness.

Many people who go to teachers, they say "Master, if someone were to punch me, how should I respond?" If that master follows the Mahayana Sutras, you could be sure what he will say: "You must be patient and accept. Concentrate on visualizing this person gives you a punch in the face as your mother or father." And they teach you some way of transforming the situation.

Instead if this issue arises in Dzogchen, if the question "If this someone is giving me a punch, how do I have to respond?", if the master says that you must accept that and bear with it, he is mistaken. It means that he hasn't understood the principle of Dzogchen. Nor is it necessarily the right principle when you see him starting the punch, that you give him a punch in the face first. Not even that is necessarily correct.

So what has to be taught? You have to proceed on the basis of your awareness, what you recognize of the situation. We have no law in the manual about what to do if punched. If there were a type of law like that, then we would have a hundred volumes of laws covering all cases. You couldn't even memorize them. There would be so many different laws and rules.

Moreover, all things manifest by reason of the secondary causes which exist. For example, if we were now to consider that there was a man coming from there with a club, we could make something fall on him over there before he ever arrives here. This is one way we could cease a situation. But that doesn't correspond itself, because he could come from there or he could arrive in some other fashion. Because things happen by reason of the secondary causes in operation.

"By reason of the secondary causes" means that for example, right here now, there is a door over there. But today is not tomorrow. Tomorrow we may have an open window here, and/or somebody might come in in some other fashion.

Therefore it is very important that you base your awareness also in life, all of our program, whatever we are doing. Everything must proceed by awareness. Normally when people understand the teachings, they tend to think that the teachings only have to do with meditation. If you go to a master, he gives you an initiation, and this is considered the teaching.

But in Dzogchen it doesn't work out that way. In Dzogchen there has to be an awareness of daily life. Daily life is always relative to the teaching, so it means that the teaching must speak of everything and deal with everything. I will give you an example from my master. My master is really a fantastic master. So my master, Changchub Dorje, normally presents himself in life as a doctor, a healer. His work, his daily activity, is that of making medicines, and he is very famous as a doctor, as a physician and maker of medicine. Because his medicines are not only traditional medicines, but he has his own particular healing methods, and they have had great success.

Changchub Dorje

So people come from very very far away to him to receive medicines. Every day in front of his house is a large number of people. A very few of them come for the teachings. Why is that? Because he presents himself as a doctor. Because he presents himself as a kind of peasant. He doesn't present himself as a monk or as some other elegant figure. Important people do not come to visit him, because they do not know how to cope with how to present themselves. Those who come to him as a master can come even from very far away or people who are really sincerely interested in getting teachings.

And he really lives, seriously speaking, like a peasant. It's not just a way of presenting himself, but all of his disciples who live there are like a little agricultural cooperative. They work the fields and they eat together. So for example when I was there, a Chinese inspection team came. In that period they were doing the agricultural reform as it was called in Eastern Tibet. And they took care of all the monasteries. And they came to my master and the Chinese did not know what to do with it because there was nothing to reform. This was awareness.

Another thing, the whole area where my master lived, a very large area, was under the rule of the Dalai Lama in Central Tibet which always sent from Central Tibet an official, a government employee, to govern that area. But at the office there was almost nothing to do. Nobody would go to the government office to conduct a lawsuit or raise a complaint or to ask for help with internal problems of the countryside. Instead in all of these types of situations, people with problems and losses and the like would come to my master for advice. It doesn't mean that all of the people of that area were his disciples. But people were a little habituated to who he was. Because he would give advice and resolve a problem. This belongs to the teaching of Dzogchen.

When I was in college, the masters would complain and the teachers would reproof me if I didn't respect the rules. I was little, and I didn't know how to give much attention to the rules. I used to make a lot of noise in the college, and they would complain. Sometimes things were a little worse. They would make me do prostrations for hours and hours. That is the normal way of doing things.

But when I got to my master, it was a completely other matter. My master would give me advice in all regards as to how to live, how to bring the teachings into my life, and dedicate my life to the teachings. And thus I finally understood that the teachings were valid not only for meditation, but had to do with one's daily living.

Thus you see that the teachings of Dzogchen give much much importance to what we call awareness. Many people only speak of the teachings of Dzogchen where we say "without limits" thinking of limitations of something that is not correct. They think that they have a license to do any and everything. And they do. What they call the practice of Dzogchen becomes disorderly. That means they haven't really understood.

Dzogchen doesn't mean that you do the first thing that comes into your head. Dzogchen is a means of having obtaining self-awareness, self-knowledge. If I don't possess

semzin, laziness

self-awareness and self-knowledge, then I must at least have the awareness of that fact that I don't have that self-awareness. Then I may know that I need a rule to govern my situation, and then a rule is positive. This is why what I say self-awareness is so important. At this point it seems to me that everybody is a bit tired.

In regard to the semzin (sems 'dzin), we have prepared a few pages on the semzin. The people who are interested afterwards can make photocopies, because we don't have enough to give a copy to everybody who needs one. However first of all I will explain a few of these.

One semzin is that you concentrate on the letter AH or the English letter "A". You see it on the point of your nose. You don't think of it as something placed on your nose. But it is present. If you don't know the Tibetan AH that is not important. It can be the English "A". It is better to use the capital "A".

Slowly when you have the real sense of the presence of this AH or "A", you let it move with your breathing. With your exhalation, you concentrate on this AH moving away. As you inhale the AH comes back towards your nose. And you keep doing this many, many times. While you inhale, exhale, inhale, exhale, you keep concentrating that the AH comes towards you and away. This is a way to practice which also gives you more clarity. And it is directly linked obviously to breathing and prana.

Normally when you do shinay, you mustn't be all day there forcing shinay. Every so often you should stop the shinay, and do some semzin, one or another. Because in shinay there is nothing to do. And after awhile you get bothered by that. So you have to charge up again a little. So it is useful to do a bit of this semzin.

As I said earlier, one thing that is very important is that you must never oblige yourself or force yourself to practice. You must never constrain yourself to do it. Those of you who have followed some kind of sutra teaching for instance, may have that tendency. Because in the sutra they speak for example of impermanence. If someone asks at that level "When I have the feeling of not practicing, or I don't want to practice, what should I do?" In the sutra practices, they say "This we call laziness. It is a kind of devil for a practitioner. And it interrupts your practice, and you have to overcome this laziness. And you have to make more effort." And there is a kind of struggle going on.

In Dzogchen we have nothing like that. In Dzogchen there has to be awareness. If at a given moment I don't feel like practicing, then you have to give yourself some space. There is some reason why you don't feel like practicing. At that moment for example you could do some other type of practice. Or you can just relax yourself. What is important is that you will either arise again or you will continue it. If you don't feel like doing something but you continue to force yourself to do it, it means you are suffocating yourself.

And if you force yourself and suffocate yourself now, at a later moment you will stop doing anything at all. Thus if this kind of thing happens to you, you would have to give

semzin

yourself space. Giving yourself space doesn't mean just carrying on indifferently everyday, just not caring. A practitioner of Dzogchen must have awareness. Awareness also means the sense of presence of impermanence. Thus if I leave myself space today, this evening, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, all my life leaving myself space, then you don't conclude anything. You don't arrive at anything in your practice.

That means you don't have the sense of a presence of impermanence. It doesn't mean that you have to struggle with your laziness, but you have to have awareness of impermanence. I spoke of this? It is not important that you concentrate for months and months on the theme of impermanence, but it is important that you always have that awareness of impermanence present. Then it has the real value of helping you overcome your laziness. So I have spoken of one semzin.

Another semzin can be practiced with the word OM. If you want to concentrate on the letter OM, you can concentrate on the letter OM at the center of your body, a bit the same as in the practice of the voice I gave you yesterday. If you have already entered into the type of fixation which is without an object, then without concentrating on the word OM, you can go directly into the practice of sounding the OM. You sound the OM and you continue to sound the OM, particularly when come any thoughts that disturb you. At that moment you sound the OM with greater intensity.

Before when I was speaking of concentration on the AH, I forgot to say a few things which are rather useful to you. If someone has any physical disturbance, if you have for example some poor digestion and you feel something hard and lumpy in your stomach or you have back pains or something like an inflammation, all these types of illness, you can practice that this AH that you are working with possesses a kind of heat. If this AH is warm, then when I inhale, I could feel my inhalation as warm.

If someone has contrary disturbances, disturbances that are opposite to the first like fever, or disturbances of the bile, or certain problems with the liver or headaches, in those cases you have to concentrate on the AH as giving a cold sensation. Now I have told you two semzins.

Then you could do another type of semzin. If a practitioner is quite familiar with yantra yoga, you could concentrate on the word RAM, red in color, at the center of the navel chakra. Or if you don't know the word RAM, you can concentrate on a little red bead. And this red color corresponds to the element fire. Normally we use words because knowing the word you immediately understand its meaning. A person who knows the word RAM and its meaning understands immediately that it is referring to fire. If you know that the meaning is fire, then it is sufficient to see a little red sphere or bead.

And you fix on this red bead or word RAM. It is like fixation. And then from it emerges and expands a light. This light expands outside, beyond. It's like when you screw a bulb in somewhere, and out of the opening in the shade emerges light. From all of the holes, all of the openings of your body emerges light. And also through the pores of your skin so you have the light emerging from you everywhere.

semzin

And then it condenses back into this red bead or RAM. You can concentrate on this happening, folding out and refolding back in. And you can synchronize that slowly with your breathing in and out. And this is good above all for creating heat. It is not the practice of tummo, the inner heat, but it has close relationship to it.

And I haven't mentioned that the song of the vajra itself which you learn is a semzin. In this case you don't concentrate on the meaning of the words, you just sound it. And you must try to find yourself in the dimension of the sound.

There is another semzin. You can concentrate on a kind of visualization of Vajrasattva just the way you would normally do in the ngondro. You would see body of light of Vajrasattva that you find above you. It is not important if it is facing me or facing away from me, but it is here above me.

Normally when you do certain types of guruyoga, it is also much more simple if it is facing towards me about this height before me. Because that way we can link the light between myself more easily. But sometimes we do it the other way in order to have a kind of nectar flow down into the body. And in this case the figure can face in the same direction that I am facing.

In any case you concentrate on this Vajrasattva above you, and you imagine that from this figure of Vajrasattva much much nectar flows down. And this nectar enters into my body and purifies and cleans both within and outside my body. And thus changes my body as if into a body of crystal. And then we have the presence of complete purity. You continue to be in that state. This is a semzin.

There is another semzin. You use the sound HA. You could use the two that are slightly different. HA, HAH. HAH is the aspirated Ha. Right here it is not important how you write it. You are not going to be concentrating on the written form. But you sound it. You sound the HA in a very strong way, above all when many thoughts come. And the more thoughts that come, the more power you give to this HA. And that is one way of doing it.

Another way of practicing semzin. One of the sharpest and one of the most useful is to practice with the word PHAT. Now you are used to using the word PHAT when we practice the chod. PHAT is an aspirated word. There is a final "T" because the "T" sound makes the word PHAT a cutting sound.

First of all you remain with your mind relaxed. And then, whether there is a thought arising or not, unexpectedly brusquely you sound the word PHAT strongly. When you sound the PHAT for a moment, there are not thoughts present. The thoughts block automatically. Having blocked your thoughts and judgments and considerations, then remain for a bit in this state in which no thoughts are present. The moment thoughts become present again, you say another PHAT. And this you can do many, many times.

You have to do this somewhere where you could do it. You may have neighbors or people around you. If you are there shouting PHAT, you might get into arguments with people. Moreover, it isn't very aesthetically beautiful to show people

melong, tagdrol, thodrol

that you are practicing. The practice of Dzogchen is done to the maximum degree possible in a way that nobody even notices, knows, that you are practicing. It must never be something that you do for a show so that you become some kind of a religious fanatic. This is extremely important.

Now I have told you a number of semzin. As I mentioned we have something with all the semzin written. And you can pretty much understand it easily.

Now I would like to say a few words about this thing. This has on the one side the melong. And on the back side you will see a triangle and within it the round form of the ganshi (dga' dkyil). You remember that is the way of concentrating to do a guryoga.

And then there is a kind of design around that. It's not actually a design. There are six words there. These are what we call the six words of space. It could also in a sense refer to the six lokas or the six realms. But in fact to explain precisely these six words there is a tantra of Dzogchen.

But its conclusion is the famous consideration called tagdrol (btags grol ??). Tagdrol means that he who wears it will be liberated. And this is also an inclusion of what is called thodrol (thos grol). Thodrol is the word as in Bardo Thodrol, the Tibetan Book of the Dead. In the Bardo Thodrol there are many invocations, the names of many Budhhas, ??, and the like. Many think that the principle of thodrol is that.

These are useful but the principal thodrol is these six words here. Therefore it is very important for a practitioner to have awareness of these six words. Sometimes they are useful to help others. Someone for example who has a parent, an old father and mother who couldn't care less about the teachings, may want to help that parent. That person may be dying. You don't know what to do for them. At that point you have got to know that you could use the tagdrol. You can write it and put it on their body.

When you speak of it as thodrol, you can also pronounce these six syllables in their hearing. Because these six words are capable of putting a positive cause into that person's existence. These six positive causes means that even if this person is now dying or dead and there is nothing to be done, another time around that person will find the possibility of practicing.

Thus we come upon in life not just relatives but many many people and situations. All of us for example who in daily life eat meat. Many practitioners become vegetarians. That is because they do not want to disturb or harm animals. But many many practitioners of Dzogchen are for example not vegetarian. But they can have awareness as regards what they are eating. They do not eat with indifference.

If you utilize the six words, you are capable of putting a positive cause into the existence of the animal which you are eating. If you are capable of putting the positive cause there, it means that you have created a possibility for that animal which you are eating to one day cease its transmigration. At that point it becomes much more positive to eat the meat of the animal than to not eat it. Of course if you eat with indifference, without awareness or concern

great transfer, sambhogakaya
saying "I am a practitioner of Dzogchen ... "

... this body is utilized. And why do we have to do this? Normally all of tantrism at the Anuttara tantra level speaks of realization taking place in the state of bardo. That means that as soon as the physical body and the state of consciousness are detached from each other, realization takes place. Clearly this means that you have left the body and now you realize yourself.

Now it is said that the great transfer is a way of manifesting which is extremely important, important above all to the benefit of other beings. This explanation means that when one has entered into the great transfer, you actively carry out benefit for others. Active means that if I wanted to go there, I think it and I do it. For example, if I want to heal a given person, I do something that's actively intervening, actively acting to heal that person, because having the physical body as a human body, I am active.

In general, what is spoken of as realization is above all what is called the manifestation of the sambhogakaya in the state of bardo. It doesn't mean that is less important than the great transfer, but the way of presenting the state is different. Most realized beings don't usually remain within the limits of action. Normally it is said that if you remain within the limits of action, then you can't be totally realized.

But then how could realized beings carry out actions for the benefit of others? When you are a realized being, you possess infinite wisdoms. But infinite wisdoms are passive for beings. There is no activity in the sense that Vajrasattva says "Ah, that being is suffering" and he sends a ray to help him. It doesn't exist in realization. No realized being has the intention of performing an action for benefit. Realization means beyond all intention.

Therefore realized beings possess only infinite wisdoms, but not intentions. These infinite wisdoms are like qualifications, its qualities. We always use the example of the sun. The sun possesses innumerable rays of light. But these rays of light arrive passively where they must arrive. Because the sun has no particular intention of sending light to some particular place or at some particular time. If there is a place that is not adapted, if it is not suitable, it never receives the light of the sun. Because in this case it depends completely on he who receives. This passivity is the difference between what we speak of as the great transfer or the way of being in the sambhogakaya.

When one is in the state of the great transfer, a renunciation of carrying out an activity for the benefit of others could only be a moment in which there is some sambhogakaya manifestation. This doesn't mean then that it's less than the sambhogakaya level.

This achievement of the great transfer is considered above all the outcome of a certain practice in the Upadesha section of Dzogchen. In the Upadesha section of Dzogchen, there is a practice called thogay (thod rgal). In thogay we explain four types of light, four phases in the development of practice. When an individual has perfected or completed his practice at the fourth phase, then what happens is the

thogay, rainbow body, Nyagla Padma Dudul
manifestation of the great transfer.

If an individual hasn't completed the fourth phase, but has perhaps just entered the fourth phase, then when he dies, he doesn't leave a body. What does "he doesn't leave a body" mean? He dies. He manifests death, because he hasn't completed the fourth light. But after death, after a few days, say within a week, his body disappears. What remains is only the fingernails and the hair. The fingernails and the hair remain because they are what has been considered impurities of the physical body. This form is called jalu ('ja' lus), that is, the rainbow body. And this type of manifestation also manifests itself actively.

And this has happened a great many times, particularly where there is the teaching of that part of the Dzogchen teachings called Longde (klong sde). This happened to innumerable masters, above all, to those practicing the Longde teachings. In fact there was a period when it was just happening continually. And most recently this tradition of Longde was unified with the tradition of Dzogchen Upadesha. And again among the practitioners of the Dzogchen nyingthig, and nyingthig means the Upadesha section.

There have been many many masters who have not left the body. This is history. And you are used to hearing things like "A hundred years ago somebody did not leave a body" or "Three hundred years ago two or three people didn't leave a body". If you say to me "What's the real proof" it might be told that that is difficult. Normally people would say "The reason is that the story has been passed on as history, and we've received the word from the past."

For many western people, who haven't had this experience, it could seem like a fairy tale. It could seem like a fable. And also for a scholar of Tibetan things, reading all these books in which it says "one person after another left no body," He might think that it is some kind of fantasy or imagination. But it is something that is extremely concrete, concrete because it also happened extremely recently.

When I say it happened recently, nobody can deny it. For example the master of my master called Nyagla Padma Dudul (nyag bla pad ma bdud 'dul ??) is very famous. It was one of the big events. He left no body. As usual he wasn't of course one of those very important masters with an elegant appearance. While he was alive almost nobody gave any importance to him. He just had a few rather poor disciples, not people of really high class. So at the end Nyagla Padma Dudul may have had twenty odd particular disciples.

He and his disciples used to always continually travel around in sort of a pilgrimage. They did not travel elegantly on horseback or coaches. They went around the way chod practitioners do. But the practice of the chod is not just a practice. People also practice the chod in order to beg a little food. And when they go on pilgrimage, you arrive in front of some family at their home without asking that they give you food. You make a bit of noise with the double-sided drum, and dogs come and bark at you, and the owner of the house usually gives food. And it is of course not a negative action. It is a practice. It is a practice which can also bring good to others, and Padma Dudul and his friends used to

Nyagla Padma Dudul

go around in this fashion.

And there was a particular mountain where he used to live. In the last part of his life he spent his time there. And then one day he announced to his friends that he would be dead in about two or three weeks. And he sent for all his old disciples who weren't present there at that moment. They all came together and practiced together for a period of about two weeks. He gave many teachings at that point.

And then at the end he said "This week, I am going". Then he asked his disciples to accompany him up the mountain. And these were very faithful disciples. Because they knew he was a real practitioner and one who really knew the Dzogchen teachings. So they carried on "You mustn't leave us. You mustn't go. You mustn't do ..." and the like. This is not a story. My master was there.

He said "There is nothing to do. This is my moment. Please come along." So they accompanied him up the mountain. And he had his little tent. And he climbed into his little tent and he had them sew up the door. He wasn't sick. Nothing was wrong. He was fine. He asked them to come back in a week. And all of the disciples weeping went back down to the foot of the mountain, waited a week, and after seven days they came back up. They opened the tent, and they found only his hair and his fingernails.

He wasn't a monk. He wore a peasant's typical costume. He wore a belt, and they found his clothing and his belt as if a snake had sloughed off its skin. When this happened, at this point Padma Dudul became famous. In Tibet this is very natural and usual. When somebody dies in an extraordinary way, then everybody starts saying he was very important. Sometimes it is advantageous to the disciples.

And there were others like this. I think at one time I saw in one of Trungpa's books an account of one of these, and in fact the account he gave was true. It happened right in my part of the country, in Derge. There was an old old fellow who didn't leave a body. Nobody considered the old man in any way extraordinary. He had a son. His son was a monk in the Nyingma monastery. This old man was a stone carver. He lived by cutting mantras into rock, and he would sell these stones to people. He wasn't poor. He had quite a number of animals, and he had a woman who was sort of herding the animals, because his wife was already dead for a very long time.

He had been the servant of a Dzogchen master many years before. He was just a servant. He wasn't a disciple. But fortunately he listened to the teachings that were given, and he practiced them. People did not see anything as a result of his practice. So one day he announced that within a week he was going to die.

In Tibet when somebody comes up with an announcement like this "within a week I am going to die", people understand that it is a pre-announcement that he is going to leave no body. And the old man asked that the functionaries involved, the officials of the nearby mountain monastery, be invited because he wanted to divide up his animals, a part to the monastery, a part to his son, and a part to the woman who had been the animal herder.

Why did he do this? Because there was a tradition in the

rainbow body

monastery, if somebody's son belongs to the monastery, and if there is no continuity of the family, then their possessions go to the monastery. Even the family cannot intervene. Even the government cannot intervene. If the son is in the monastery, the monastery gets everything. This is an old system. So he was trying to get them not to take everything. He was trying to divide up the animals.

When he had done all of this work he said "Now I want to die. Close me up." Everybody was amazed, and he became very famous. This was in 1952. The Chinese were already around in this part of the country. After seven days the place had to be opened up. All of the monks of the nearby monasteries came. Many lay people and nobles, and also many Chinese officers and administrators. And the Chinese administrators at that point were still soldiers of ?? army. It isn't that they came to see the manifestation of the body of light. They were ready to do a propaganda scene, showing how superstitious and silly the Tibetans were to believe in this kind of thing.

On that day the place was opened up, and inside there was found nothing but fingernails and hair. This is not just a story. First of all it is not mere history. It is very recent. I was not personally present, but my uncle who was a great practitioner of Dzogchen, and surely did not lie nor tell lies, was present there. Because he was amazed and he went to see what was happening. He returned, came home, saying "What fools we have been not to recognize that man" and he was weeping over it. This is a proof for example.

The same thing happened four years earlier a little bit to the north of our country. There was a man who had been a monk of a Sakyapa monastery. A Sakyapa monastery is a very severe as far as rules are concerned. There was an occasion when that monk had been seen going out with a girl, and they grabbed hold of him and beat him with sticks. And they threw him out of the monastery. Such a bad character couldn't remain in the monastery.

And there is nothing to be surprised about when I said that they beat him with clubs. This kind of severity is not just found in Tibetan monasteries. Until just recently Tibet was a feudal state, and beating people up was a normal way of doing things. To be surprised you are thinking in terms of a democratic ...

So he was thrown out of the monastery for this. He went to the north of Tibet. I don't recall, but maybe I mentioned yesterday or the day before a famous practitioner and master of Dzogchen who was called Chapadoushien ?? who lived in the north, who lived as a nomad, lived by being an animal herder, who was with his many children and wife and so forth, and also gave teachings. Most recently he became very famous, because there came from him a great number of really marvelous disciples.

So the disgraced monk went up there to that master. And fortunately for him he followed Dzogchen teachings. So he became one of the disciples, and at a certain point his master advised him to go back to his part of the country, his area. He returned and he lived relatively near the monastery where he had been beaten and driven off. And he had no hatred for the monastery. And now he is free. And it had been true. He

rainbow body, semzin

did have a relationship with that girl.

Now he lived with that girl. He built a little house, a little cabin, and the girl also did a little bit of practicing, and they kept a few animals, and they worked in the earth. And he practiced. And he lived there until, it seems to me, about 1948.

And at the beginning of 1949 he announced that it was his time to die. He invited the monastery to come and see him, to guarantee that they would something to his wife, and not take all of his possessions. And the monastery also accepted. Of course he had to offer some part of his animals to the monastery. And then he announced that they had to leave him be for seven days closed up. And after seven days they opened up and no body, only the hair and the fingernails. When this happens, it is called the rainbow body.

So for the practitioner of Dzogchen, it seems extremely possible to achieve the body of light. Because when we see Tibetan practitioners of Dzogchen, there were really very few of them. The number was very few who practiced Dzogchen. In Tibet, virtually the majority of males were monks. That meant that these monks lived in monasteries. Very few people practice Dzogchen. Among these very few who practiced Dzogchen, there were many many who manifested this body of light. These three of whom I gave an account are just some recent cases.

A little before them, I am not sure precisely what year it was, but something like 1939, 40, 41, there was a fantastic Bonpo practitioner who was called Shalshar ??, very famous. And he was so incredible that also the Buddhists honored him. According to Buddhists he practiced Buddhist Dzogchen. We don't know. But in any case he practiced Dzogchen. He too did the same thing. He did not leave a body. I have seen his tomb. Usually in the tomb they put the hair and the fingernails. If we read the biographies of the masters of the Longde tradition, it seems virtually incredible. There are many many many who left no body.

So according to me it is not so difficult. It is perfectly possible for somebody who practices Dzogchen. It doesn't mean that you would always have to be like Milarepa on the mountain. But you have to be a practitioner, and not just a person who claims to be a practitioner or is said to be a practitioner of Dzogchen. This is someone who finds himself really in the teaching, whose daily life is linked in practice. And then there is rapid progress. This is to explain something that I have been asked about.

As we don't have a great deal of time, and I want to explain above all the most useful things. I have explained how to do shinay. When one doesn't find one's shinay well or doesn't know how to get the calm state, to guarantee that you get to shinay or to be sure that you are getting where you should get in Dzogchen, there are many types of practice to assure this which are called semzin (sems 'dzin). In Dzogchen it is not really very important to necessarily do the ngondro preparation. But I have not said that the ngondro doesn't have a value. That is not what I just said.

But it is very important that a practitioner of Dzogchen be very familiar with the so-called semzin. He must know how to

vajra relationship

do the semzin. He has to experiment with and try the different semzin. When I've tried various semzin, then I discover for myself which of them are useful for my practice.

When a doctor performs surgical operation, he has a lot of different instruments beside him: pinchers, scissors, and scalpels, and the like. And when he is certain as to cut, he knows that he can take immediately what is needed because it is at hand. Just at the moment when he started cutting, if he had to start learning what the different instruments were, that would not be too good. So you have to have a certain familiarity with what the instruments are.

Also a practitioner of Dzogchen normally can help the other practitioners a great deal. It is not necessarily that there always has to be the formal situation of master and disciples. It is not said that it has to be like that. We try as much as possible to get rid of that whole imagery of hierarchy. Both master and disciple, or disciple to disciple, must always be faithful. In this way one can help another.

There must never be a barrier between one disciple and another, but rather sincerity. This is a principle of the teaching, and it is very important. When we say friends, for example, we mean friends until the death. Even if I love someone very much with great friendship, I can't carry this friendship on beyond death.

But when people are connected through the teachings, it means a connection of spirit between the persons. For example, when you know what is meant by being in the dimension of sound, when you know that this dimension of sound also represents the primordial state of consciousness, thus when one sings EMA KIRI KIRI in this way, the connection in the state comes automatically.

And when we speak of telepathic transmission, it doesn't mean that a master has to be on some kind of throne and do something. "Telepathic" here means both find themselves at the same moment in the state. It means preparation on the part of the student and also something done on the part of the master. This kind of a connection means a connection between disciple and disciple not just until death but until realization. This is one of the parts of our ??.

If one doesn't respect this through lack of awareness, for example between person and person, where one treats another badly or offends another without presence of mind and awareness, it isn't that you just give offense to the relationship between master and student. It is also a matter of the relationship between student and student.

We speak of "brothers and sisters of the vajra". This principle is very important, and it must always be present to your mind. That is why I said this morning that practitioners have to be very friendly. They also have to have an open relationship. The mustn't be like two office colleagues who happen to work in the same place. Because the entire spirit of this is quite different from that.

When we speak of as one's commitments, vows, or damtsig, one of the principal elements in that is that this awareness must be present. You must seek not to create obstacles for yourself by violating this. Sometimes it can happen like that. Because man lives in his passions, and all kinds of

vajra relationship, Vajrasattva

conflicts are present. But it is very important to have full awareness in this regard. When one has this presence of mind or awareness, then one can overcome the conflict.

This kind of thing is much more difficult between husband and wife for example, or between lovers for example, or even between friends. Today is based on the relationship or friendship or marriage. Tomorrow they fight, and when they fight, they don't think for a moment of that relationship in spiritual terms. This means being unaware of the teachings. Giving you an example, even if a husband and wife are not in agreement, there is a way of separating. But there is no need for them to become enemies. If this principle is present ...

... speaks of the dancing. For example if one has received a certain kind of Kriya tantra teaching, people say "I've received initiations and I forgot to recite my mantra" and they think the whole thing ends there. This exists, but isn't how it shows in Dzogchen.

In Dzogchen you must go to the presence and the keeping present of our awareness. This is how commitment of the damtsig is lived. We have to discover also how there exists conflict between man and man, between group and group, and between person and person. There are many motives. There are many reasons, and innumerable conflicts.

All of these fundamental factors have to be dissolved a bit. I'm a Tibetan. If I insist for example that I am a Tibetan and I am not happy to find myself in your country, I can create innumerable conflicts. It is much better if I think of myself as a creature of this planet earth. It is a matter of the principle of awareness to get rid of these conflicts. Everything must find its own answer. A problem can never find its resolution from outside. And that is why it is so important to have this awareness. And this evening I am finishing on this point.

First of all I would like to explain this book. If anyone else needs a book, there are several here. Page 10. This is the visualization of Vajrasattva. We have already spoken of the type of visualization of Vajrasattva when I spoke of semzin. The system is always the same. That is, you concentrate on Vajrasattva above you. And you experience this Vajrasattva as you do in the guruyoga as the unity of all the masters and of all the lineages of masters.

And the form or image of Vajrasattva is available here. You can see the drawing on the page. This image of Vajrasattva is what is called a Sambhogakaya form. It is elaborately ornamented on the head, on the arms, on the body, on the feet. This is a symbol of richness. It is like a material richness, or wealth of things. Because when man speaks of wealth, he normally is referring to gold and jewels and possessions as wealth.

But what is behind this is that the sambhogakaya is a manifestation of the richness of wisdom. Since there is no way of drawing wisdom, therefore there is this recourse to all of these symbols of wealth. The truth is however that this ornamentation is typical of an Indian prince of Buddha's time. And they took that as a method of displaying or manifesting

Vajrasattva

this significance. Not only this symbol, but all of these symbols of the divinity and the like, are in the costume of ancient India.

For example, in Tibet when Padmasambhava arrived, he constructed a statue of Tara and people asked how Tara must be shown. Tara is not a person in that sense. No one knows how her face should be displayed. They decided to copy the face of the most beautiful girl they could find. This is an example of how these things were done. And this is how it is for example when we see the face given to the Madonna in Christian art. This is how all of the divinities are presented and depicted.

Thus you concentrate on the sambhogakaya image that is ornamented and rich. It is not necessary to concentrate with great particularity on the details, but you must have a general idea and above all you must feel this image.

And then at the center of Vajrasattva, you concentrate on the word HUM and around this HUM circles the mantra of 100 syllables. When we say that the mantra is whirling around a letter like the HUM, you mustn't think that it is just a flat picture. The fact that it is whirling around means that it is moving. If it is moving, it is moving rapidly and you can't distinguish the words. It is necessary that you have the consideration while reciting the mantra that it is a whirling mantra in movement. If you had to concentrate on the words as written, you would become enormously confused.

If you come upon some kind of practice where it is written that you must concentrate on the words as written, you must know that that is not a mistaken thing. Because that does exist for example in the Kriya yoga level of tantra. There are words and the words must be placed around the central syllable in a way as if printed. They must be visualized carefully. And you concentrate as if it were written on a piece of paper. The central word that is found at the center. The other words which are around it are all like lying on their sides following the movement of a circle.

Instead in the Anuttara tantra in general, when we say the mantra is whirling around, it means that the central letter or word is as if on its feet at the center and the other letters or words of the mantra are circling it as if they were walking around it. The central word is upright, and the others are horizontal moving around it. And the ways that they can turn are two. In those practices in which is represented a masculine divinity, they go clockwise. If the divinity in question is feminine, they move counter-clockwise. This is the distinction which we generally describe as the difference between method and energy.

If we are speaking here of the hundred syllables it would turn in this way, facing you clockwise. On the melong it goes the opposite way as in the form of energy. But in the form of method, you're looking at it and it is moving clockwise from your point of view.

There descends from the body of Vajrasattva an infinity of nectar. It purifies, clears, both the inside and outside of oneself. And all that remains is as clear as transparent crystal. While concentrating that purification is taking place, you recite the 100 syllable mantra. I think that

6 lokas purification

almost all of you have the transmission of the 100 syllable mantra. Nonetheless, I'll read it aloud to give it to you.

At this point you must do the practice of the six lokas. I'm going to explain a bit how it is done. For the six lokas it is not necessary to have the book. You can remember it. First of all you concentrate on the soles of both feet. You concentrate on two beads of a reddish-brown color, not luminous. This is the cause of the hell vision or hell realm vision. You have to think of this on yourself. There's no divinity, and no transforming it. You have this. You think of yourself as yourself and you are in a controlled position.

You are concentrating on that very bead of dull reddish-brown color. On that bead is the mantra with the three letters OM AH and HUM. The OM AH and HUM are luminous. And as you concentrate, you sound OM AH HUM. These letters, the OM AH and HUM, radiate light. And as this light emerges, radiates forth, it slowly eliminates the reddish brown bead, completely replacing it with glowing light. This must be repeated a number of times.

Next you go to the cause of the preta realm of vision. Here we have a gray bead at the base of the trunk of the body at the genitals. First you must clarify the presence of this little bead through concentration. Then you concentrate on the presence of OM, AH, and HUM on it. You begin to recite, sound, OM AH HUM, and you let the light emanating from them eliminate the gray bead. Mentally we may think it as eliminated after three times. But the cause of one's karma is not as easy to eliminate mentally as it may seem. For which reason it is necessary to repeat a great deal.

When you've sufficiently and repeatedly eliminated this preta level of vision, you concentrate that near the navel is a red bead which is the cause of the animal vision. In none of these places are you concentrating on a luminous bead. The bead is the cause of the passion or vision. It is not luminous. When your concentration is quite clear, and you have this bead fully present, once again you sing the OM AH HUM and purify it as you have done with the others.

Then you concentrate on the blue bead at the center of the body which is the cause of the human level of vision. Then with the OM AH HUM, you purify as you have done before.

Then you concentrate on the green bead either at the throat or in the neck towards the back. You should concentrate where it is convenient for you to feel it as you practice. That is the cause of the asura, the demi-god level of vision. The passion of jealousy is the fundamental cause of that level of karmic vision. You concentrate like this, and then with the three words OM AH HUM you purify it repeatedly.

Then at the end you concentrate on the dull white bead, not luminous. And you purify it with the OM the AH and the HUM.

When you are practicing this type of concentration, you may find that it is always easier to concentrate on the head, on the throat, on the heart and so forth. You may find that on the lower parts of the body like under the feet, you feel less. That makes sense. Our thoughts present themselves towards the head, and the functions of our senses are located

6 lokas purification

around the head. When you go a little farther away from there it may seem a little more difficult.

But for purification it is important to employ much more time for those areas that are farther away from the head. Because in regard to their qualities, the cause of the hell realm, the hell vision, is much worse than the cause of the human realm.

These causes of the six lokas or realms of vision of course correspond with the colors of the passions. So when you concentrate, you have to pretty well remember which cause you are dealing with. For example the gray bead is always the cause of the preta level of vision. That you have to remember.

We also have other ways of practicing purification of these six lokas. Words are used for these concentrations. At the back of the blue book the six words are listed, and these words are normally used for the practice. Rather than beads there are words. And the words are used because knowing the words you recognize immediately the significance and meaning of that particular loka. But if you know the meaning it is not particularly necessary to use the words. And above all for western people who are not used to the alphabet, those words are much more complicated to remember and visualize. What is important is the color and of what it is the cause.

Another way of practicing is to concentrate on all six of these words in their six positions. And you also have the letters OM AH and HUM in their locations as normally. And then sounding the OM AH and HUM slowly, one sends rays from the OM, the AH, and the HUM to eliminate each of these six words where they are. And one does this one loka at a time.

And when this is completely done, one purifies all lokas together, sounding the OM AH HUM, concentrating that the OM AH HUM are sending their rays to eliminate all six of the lokas at one and the same time. If you find this particular way of doing it simpler for you, you can do it that way. If you don't know the words and you want to do it with the beads of appropriate color, sending rays from the OM AH and HUM, you can do it that way.

When you do this practice, if you know how to do it, it is useful to change every so often the way of doing it, because this way you get less tired. When one is not tired, the results are better. This is the way of doing the purification of the six lokas.

After that in this red book there is a form of guruyoga on page 13. This is to say that from the three places where the letters OM AH and HUM are found in the Vajrasattva figure come respectively white, red and blue rays of light which the practitioner receives in his three corresponding places with the OM AH and HUM. And in this way one receives all of the initiations of the body, voice, and mind. Then the rays come all together to receive all of the initiations and attainments at one and the same time. This is a completely Anuttara tantra style of doing guruyoga.

At the end this Vajrasattva disappears into, and becomes, oneself, and one manifests as Vajrasattva like a reflection in the melong, the mirror, that is to say, transparent and non-material. And one continues as before to see the letter

Tibetan language transcription

HUM at the center of this being now itself surrounded by the moving mantra. And concentrating on this one recites the Vajrasattva mantra on the top of page 4. This is the heart mantra of Vajrasattva.

Then if one wants to do it, there is another kind of concentration which can be added. You can concentrate on the three points where you find the OM, the AH and the HUM. That is to say, you are manifesting yourself as Vajrasattva, and at each of these three places you concentrate on a thigle, that is, a transparent rainbow-colored, five-colored, sphere. You can see in the center of each sphere a Vajrasattva, white, red, and blue. And at the center of that Vajrasattva you can see respectively the very very subtle letters OM, AH, and HUM. And with this awareness, this presence, you recite many many times the OM the AH and the HUM, OM AH HUM. This is in the style of the Dzogchen Upadesha series, and it is a method to obtain certain advantages in purification. It is above all important for making progress in seeing.

This is how you can practice if you want. At the beginning of this red book there is the discussion of the four awarenesses. You may find reading this particular transliteration, this script, rather difficult because this red book doesn't have a pronunciation key. The blue one does. At the end of the blue book, there is a pronunciation key. This is a form of transcription or transliteration that we use at the University of Naples for teaching Tibetan. It's not a transcription into Italian. It's a way of writing Tibetan in which you don't write all the words completely but still give precise detail.

If one knows Tibetan well, you can go back from this transliteration to the Tibetan. That is, you have the details present if you need them. If you don't know the details well, of course you won't be able to write. That is to say, if this was dictated to a person, he could write it down in Tibetan. Pronouncing it strictly as written here, saying it aloud, would be like dictating in Tibetan, and the person who knows Tibetan could write it down in Tibetan script. Of course if he doesn't know Tibetan script he couldn't do that.

Normally many different scholars, many different people, write transcriptions of Tibetan all in their own ways. The English do it in an English way. The French do it in a complete other way of their own. That's just for sounding and pronunciation. Naturally you can't read a text in this way. Tibetan is not a very easy language. We utilize this to be able in this way to read a little.

There are many people who are interested in the texts and teachings. If they know how to read this, later they can find texts in these characters. And we are in fact preparing many texts in these characters. We prepared about twenty-odd texts, not just written in this transliteration but with a lexicon of vocabulary at the end of the text. Thus one day a person who is interested will be able to study these texts on his own, particularly since the texts of Dzogchen I think are very important.

Now for one who follows the teaching and goes to the teacher, he hears that which the teacher has to say. Naturally the teacher has the transmission and above all the

transcription, guardians

teacher must translate in such a way as to make the meaning understood. But to carry the teaching forward, it is insufficient to just repeat what your teacher told you. You have to go a bit into the original basis, foundation, of the teaching.

Or if someone doesn't understand a particular thing or has some doubt about some matter, then I think that when such books exist, even if you haven't got a capacity to read it all, you can utilize to overcome your doubt, resolve your problem. I am saying this because a practitioner must not always be hanging onto his teacher. Sometimes this may happen. Sometimes it may happen he is always near his teacher, but in truth a teacher must always be autonomous. Today we see all masters going everywhere. You can see Tibetan lamas right and left flowing here and there.

In a few years in my opinion, it will be very easy that the language also will disappear. It's really too bad if these texts of the teachings disappear. There will be a few copies of certain books in some libraries. But if the books of the teaching are not living, then it is just like museum materials, if there is no one who is able to read the books. Already Tibetan is so difficult. It will become merely an exotic curiosity, something of curiosity.

For this reason, we thought that it would be truly useful for the future. We've decided to do our maximum so that all of the fundamental texts of Dzogchen should be available. Thus after even fifty years, if someone wants to know about the texts, even if the motive is curiosity, there will be the possibility of reading it and studying it. This is why we use this form of writing.

And above all in this blue book we always use this when we do a retreat together, and we sing the rite together, and we do the concentrations together. After having done a retreat of two or three weeks, and singing this continually, almost everybody knows how to read these letters and you don't have to study it separately, making a great effort. And thus it becomes a method for almost automatically acquiring the capacity to use this form of writing. So the first time you are looking at it and trying to read it, it is of course not so easy. But you need a bit of patience. I've just given an explanation of the reason for this form of writing, these characters.

In this blue book one of the longest items there has to do with the guardian Dorje Legpa. And when we speak of a guardian we are speaking of a protector of the teaching. Every teaching of tantra has its particular guardian or protector. It's like an owner or governor of that particular tantra.

Dzogchen also has these protectors. The most important protector for Dzogchen is the figure of Ekajati on page 11. Ekajati means "one eye". Having only one eye is a symbol of wisdom. Ekajati is like a symbolic manifestation of energy. And then as I explained yesterday, in the Dzogchen teachings much importance is given to energy. Those who govern or give force and energy to the teaching are the dakinis.

Then another guardian is Rahula. And another is Dorje Legpa, depicted on page 12. Dorje Legpa is a protector who

guardians

met Padmasambhava, who was trained by Padmasambhava. Dorje Legpa originally was a potent divinity of the Bonpo tradition. Today still in the Bonpo tradition, Dorje Legpa exists as their powerful protector, but is no longer called Dorje Legpa. He is called Ase. That is his true name. Dorje Legpa is a secret name given to him by Padmasambhava. Dorje Legpa promised to protect the Dzogchen teachings.

Among Buddhists we say that Dorje Legpa from the time he made that promise became a protector of Dzogchen. But according to the Bonpo he was already the protector of Dzogchen. In any case he is the particular protector of Dzogchen. And then for the Buddhists particularly of the Nyingma school, Dorje Legpa is reputed to be a very good protector, a very good guardian. That he is good means that he doesn't disturb or harm poor creatures.

In general if the practitioner is powerful, the protectors function well. When the practitioner is weak, sometimes the guardians play rather horrendous tricks on him. Dorje Legpa doesn't do this for which reason he is called the "good Dorje".

For example, in the Sakyapa and Kagyudpa schools there are many guardians of the so-called class of gyalpo. Gyalpo means king. It's a category or class of protector. And in the Nyingmapa school there is also this and one of the principal gyalpo is Beha ?? for example. And among the Gelugpas there is the famous Shuden ?? and Shuden also exists in the Sakyapa school. And there are other forms of gyalpo. It was considered that these protectors of the gyalpo class functioned quite well in all of the schools, not only among the Gelugpas and Sakyapas. But it's characteristic of the gyalpo class that they function well only if the practitioners are powerful.

But in general it has been found that almost everyone who practices, the guardians of the gyalpo class finish insane. There are many powers of this type in our part of the world. This means that the guardians can kind of backfire. In general if one does practice with that type of guardian, as a minimum he must have completed certain kind of mantric practice with great precision. But even so, many monks who have completed the practice of the mantra quite well sometimes are driven insane. It means that you need something even stronger to cope with the guardians. It means that you need greater spiritual capacity.

For this reason it is very important that Dorje Legpa is a good guardian and also one that responds to our needs. What do I mean when I say that he is responsive? For example when you are involved with the guardian protector Mahakala, normally we say that the various Mahakalas are guardians of wisdom. Many people consider Mahakala even a divinity. Why is he so considered? Because he doesn't function in the way that the protectors function? It is considered that to move Mahakala you need a great force or commitment or effort. This is the general concept in regards to Mahakala. And therefore you can try to reach Mahakala, but you don't get a response. There are instead classes of guardians like those of the gyalpo of which I spoke earlier. There are so-called worldly guardians. They indeed do manifest and respond easily.

Dorje Legpa, Padmasambhava

It's best therefore that a guardian be responsive and worldly, but also have the quality of wisdom. Dorje Legpa is considered one of these. This text in the blue book is the text of the negotiation between Padmasambhava and Dorje Legpa, the actual deal. That is, it reminds Dorje Legpa of the deal he made. Even if it is rather long, it is rather important.

But in general, whatever practice of the protectors you do, you must never do it as if you are asking help from the guardians or protectors. You must rather command them. In this case, how can you command guardians? First of all, you must manifest yourself as a yidam. For example if we are speaking of Dorje Legpa, you must manifest yourself as Padmasambhava in his wrathful form. You find here before this on page 8 Padmasambhava in his wrathful form.

You become, you manifest as, Padmasambhava in his wrathful form and you recite his mantra. With this presence of oneself as wrathful Padmasambhava, you invite the protectors, whichever ones are around, and you find all these guardians in front of you. And these guardians will then have the vision that I am manifest as Padmasambhava in wrathful form. To become a little more secure, we also use the mudra. This is to give greater concreteness, greater specificity.

In this case, we use the particular mantra of that guardian, that protector. The particular mantra of that guardian provides a recognition. On page 13 is the mantra of Dorje Legpa. While we pronounce this mantra, we have a sense of the presence of Dorje Legpa, and we must also have a recognition that we are manifest as Padmasambhava in wrathful form. Even if it doesn't happen like that, this mantra is something that authenticates this knowledge.

If I go out in the streets of New York for example and somebody says "Hi Norbu, how are you?" I would be amazed that that person knows me. There is a principle by which he knows me. It's a bit like that. This is how we make use of this treaty between Dorje Legpa and Padmasambhava. It doesn't mean that we necessarily have to do the ritual of the guardians in a ritual fashion.

When you see a book like this many people say "Ah, that is the practice of Dzogchen. There it is". Because many people who follow Tibetan Buddhist teachings do pujas all the time. And that is not Dzogchen. If you imagine that Dzogchen is presented like this, you are very much mistaken. But if you don't ever practice the book, there is no harm done. It doesn't mean that you are not practicing Dzogchen. This is not Dzogchen.

These books contain all the methods of practice of Buddhism from the sutra on up. And they contain all the ways to make use of these different practices. And these books are to make you familiar with all that series of different practices. So when there is time you can do it.

When many of us get together, then we do it. And in this case there is also an advantage. For example when we are doing together a practice with a guruyoga concentration, there is an advantage in that a transmission is developed. Principal guardians are very good, are very powerful, and they are at the highest spiritual level. They have at their service many more medium guardians and lesser ones who can be

guardians, commitments

harmful to people. Making contact means keeping them okay. Sometimes things disturb the guardians.

One thing that bothers the guardians a lot is when one does not follow and respect one's deep vows or samaya, commitment. For example, a practitioner has his commitment. When this commitment is not completely discharged or lived out, certain forces like for example the dakinis, force another type of guardian to punish. Certain disturbances come. Also children when they don't behave well, their parents scold them. It is a bit like that.

But in Dzogchen the commitment is not, as in other levels of Buddhism, a matter of rules that say you must do this and a vow not to do that, and so forth. We say that the damtsig or commitments of Dzogchen are four recognitions that certain elements are present.

First is the awareness of emptiness. There is nothing, shunyata, the void in truth. This is a knowledge. Then we say chalpa (phyal pa). Chalpa means presence. This means that although on the one hand there is nothing, void, on the other hand everything is present that we have to continue with and go right on with. And this presence is without limits.

Then chigpu (gcig pu) means unique or only or singular. This means recognition of the state of the individual. An individual is a unique and only state.

And then there is another recognitions which is lhundrub (lhun grub), self-perfectedness. These four are not obligations to do something, but they are a knowledge. But it is not sufficient if this knowledge simply dwindles to an intellectual concept. We mean that this knowledge must be present as awareness in your life. When you possess this presence of mind, this awareness, then you are in possession of the commitment, the samaya, of Dzogchen. This is one of the principal engagements or commitments of Dzogchen. This means that the person finds himself in the state.

This means that one is trying to link or make one the state of shinay or calm, of meditation, of which we spoke, and the taking of it into daily life, movement and activity. Until there is this unification, we've said that in the relative level one must never lack awareness, and this is the principle of commitment. So this commitment is not a limited matter of having to do this or being permitted to do that. One's vow here is awareness and having the presence of one's awareness.

As regards awareness, for us in daily life most important is the relationship between people. And it is relationship with human beings in general. Still more important is the relationship with other participants in the teaching. Still more important is the relationship among those people who are of the same lineage of the teaching or who follow the same lineage of the teaching.

Many people recognize when we speak of the damtsig that the disciple must follow the master. They mustn't anger or annoy the master. They think "Otherwise there becomes a breakage of the transmission". And they only recognize this obligation. This is true, but it is not sufficient.

But also there is an obligation between and among those who participate. In Tibetan we say sampuchi (tsam ??), that

friends, lovers

is, sampu means a mass of grain which has all been massed together, accumulated together. And these must all realize themselves. They are not all the same. Some have more capacity. Others have less capacity. When it is a matter of going into another region, we take our horses or cars. Each one goes by his own means. Some get there first; some come later; some never get there; some are very late.

But when one is participating in a teaching that links you truly together like that of Dzogchen, this concept of sampuchi means that it is as if we were all in the same boat. We are all in the same big boat. Somebody says "I'm going first. I'm leaving with my valise" and somebody else says "I just couldn't care less" and jumps onto or off the boat. It creates a lot of problems for everybody. There has to be awareness that in the teachings there is this kind of linkage.

This is why I always say that when we have participated together in the teaching, we speak of brothers and sisters of the vajra. And this link must be very much respected. This is not just in the interest of the other person. It is in your personal interest. when we speak of friendship as a matter of friendship, you can be together as friends, and if things don't go well you can drop the friendship. This is like two people who are going to the same town. They can go together on a train or "You go in your car; I'll go in mine." That is not the case when you are in the same boat. So you see it is a little different.

And also that friendship is something that only lasts as long as life lasts. People are great friends. One dies. The one who survives may be unhappy and sad, and may go to the cemetery to bring some flowers. But they can't do anything more than that, and he can't do anything more than that because they are already separated. That is the principle of friendship. Much much more important is the principle of the brotherhood and sisterhood of the vajra.

And above all there must be much attention here for example, people who are linked together as husband and wife, or lovers and the like. Take the example of marriage. Marriage arises from the passions. A boy and a girl meet with passion. They love each other. And they continue going ahead. After awhile things go rather badly. This is justified by, or emerges from, the fact that from the beginning what was carrying the relationship was passion. This is nature. There has never existed a marriage in which husband and wife remained for all their lives exactly the same.

This means that for a husband and wife who are just married, everything is romantic. Everything seems beautiful. Even if one of them says a nasty word, it becomes somehow a sweet nothing. If one of them slaps the other, it seems like a caress. But after a few years, even if he or she doesn't start cursing, just the way of saying normal words can be offensive and cutting. This is nature. Many young people may not know this yet. But it is very important to learn it. Because marriage, whoever hasn't done that yet, must not be lived only through the passions, but must also be lived with awareness.

But if one loves, one mustn't confuse loving, which means

commitments, transmission, 3 bodies

wishing well to the person and benefit to the person, with the love of the passions. Naturally, being human, there is always passion. But one must try to understand what love is. And there must be awareness on this point. If one has this awareness, then tomorrow there won't be a confusion and the whole thing going badly. Today everything is fine and tomorrow things are rotten. This is a manifestation of how the passions falsify the situation. And therefore one should try to proceed on the basis of true love. When one truly finds what is called love, and possesses this awareness, then life becomes lighter, more spacious and open. And between them there is greater confidence.

If I really wish good for my wife, I have to have confidence in her just as she must give me the benefit of the doubt, and have confidence in me. This is love really. Otherwise it all becomes jealousy and problems which never end. And if this happens with one or the other, man or woman, then tomorrow it will repeat itself, and it will repeat itself a third time. This is nature. It is very important that there be awareness on these points. And this is very important in the concrete situation of our damtsig, our samaya, our commitment.

I'll explain a little about transmission. When we speak of transmission in Dzogchen, we speak of three transmissions: what is called direct transmission, symbolic transmission, and oral transmission. Normally these three transmissions are explained in terms of the history and origins of transmission.

For example, in the teachings we speak at the origin of three bodies. We speak of the dharmakaya represented by Samantabhadra. The dharmakaya is not a form or an image. We say that from the dharmakaya there was transmission direct to the sambhogakaya level.

And from the sambhogakaya, the transmission took the form of light. That is to say, the manifestation of light took the form of manifestations of yidams. When you speak of a tantra, there is always the manifestation of a yidam and mandala and these manifestations always belong to the sambhogakaya level. These manifestations and transmissions are considered as always happening through mudra or through other symbols.

This means for example that Vajrasattva transmitted to Garab Dorje in the form of mudra not orally, not in the form of words. You have to know also that when we speak of a manifestation of the sambhogakaya, such a manifestation is not commonly visible to all beings. To have a contact with the sambhogakaya level requires a person at a high level of realization.

Therefore all transmissions from the sambhogakaya take place involving highly realized human or non-human disciples like Garab Dorje, for example. The person who has had a transmission from the sambhogakaya is considered a nirmanakaya manifestation.

From the nirmanakaya comes the oral transmission. That means there is direct contact between human being and human being. For this reason we say that from Garab dorje comes the oral transmission. This is a way of explaining in historical terms.

transmission, initiation

However when we speak of the Dzogchen transmission from master to student, from teacher to disciple, we say that Dzogchen contains these three transmissions. This doesn't mean it's just a matter of history. If it were just a matter of history, then any contemporary present transmission would automatically contain these three levels.

Transmission is thought of by many as simply as matter of doing an initiation. Transmission of course can also take place by way of initiation, but you have to know what an initiation is. It can be considered transmission when there is an awakening through initiation. If there isn't that awakening, then it is merely a form of blessing as the Tibetans usually do.

You are all familiar with the fact that they all go to a master or teacher to get a great many initiations. And many of these teachers do a great many elegant ceremonies. It is very difficult that that type of thing should be a real initiation. But it doesn't mean that it has no benefit. If somebody recites a mantra over you and throws some water over you, that does have a value as purification. But the true principle of initiation is not that.

Initiation truly means that there is transmission from master to disciple. And to understand that transmission, you have to understand the three levels of it. It is not simply a matter of history. But right now when a Dzogchen master transmits to a disciple, he always transmits at these three levels of transmission.

You must remember when you do practice or anything else that everything works through body, voice, mind. These are always relative to also what is called the three bodies and the three wisdoms. And initiation too functions in these ways. The teacher explains orally in all the ways that he can to impart a certain knowledge. This is the principal value of the oral transmission.

But this doesn't consist of something like philosophical study. If somebody says hundreds of elegant words but the person who is hearing has not understood, then it has no value. Because the most important consideration is understanding. And in order to make yourself understood you have to make use of the language that is comprehensible and clear from person to person.

It is habitual with us, particularly in the monastic tradition, that there is a very dense study of philosophy. As in the western universities, this is an intellectual activity. And actually when such people speak of philosophy or their analyses, they try to make use of the most complicated possible language. Each person tries to demonstrate to the maximum how scholarly he is. If it is a matter of study and scholarship, that is fine. But scholarly study and the teachings are quite different.

Teaching is something that must communicate. We say that one of the qualifications of a teacher is that he can communicate and make himself understood. If somebody has followed the teacher for years and years, and has always remained the same even though he has followed that master, it means something is not working right. And this you have to observe a bit in yourself and for yourself.

transmission, initiation, chod

Yesterday or the day before, we saw in the newspapers a series of articles about Tibet. American journalists had visited a certain high reincarnation in Tibet. And also they visited the high female reincarnation of Virga Pema ?? And these of course are people for whom the teachings were the traditions that were followed in the monasteries.

And this Virga Pema told the reporters that she is married now and is finished with all that spiritual life. What does this mean? It means that she never understood anything. And she had been the fourth down in the hierarchy of Tibet, the fourth highest after the Dalai Lama throne in the entire hierarchical structure. This is how things are. When things proceed in this way, it is not good for the teaching or for those who are interested in getting something from the teaching.

So it is important when you speak of transmission to know what you are dealing with. To have a correct transmission is in the interest of the student, and it is above all in the interest of the progress of his practice. And so the student must know what is involved in the correct transmission so he can see that he gets it.

There is a great Dzogchen master in the Nyingmapa school who is called Jigmay Lingpa. He says that the true initiation that one receives is when one has really understood the true meaning of the primordial state of consciousness. Until one has had this recognition and knowledge, no matter how many ceremonies you may have participated in, you have never received an initiation. This is the truth.

We normally have considered that initiation must come about through long ceremonial preparation. But these long ceremonies have a principle. When this principle has been understood in essence and is present in essence, then all that they are doing becomes positive. This is information regarding initiation.

And I'd like to inform you a little bit now about the blue book. In this blue book there is the practice of the chod. The chod was practiced in almost all of the schools in Tibet. As regards Dzogchen, the practice of the chod is considered as belonging to the attitude and of behavior, and not practice. It is a practice which gives great help in overcoming attachment.

The true concept of the chod is page 21, the beginning of the chod. And the particular thing we are talking about is the offering of the body, or the gift of the body, on page 25. Many people think of this as being in the style of shamanism. And many scholars, professors, consider that it is linked to the ideology of shamanism.

But the truth is that it is not that you cut pieces of flesh off your body and throw them somewhere. It is not a practical matter in which for example, if you see wild beasts, animals, you cut pieces off your body and throw them to them. The principle here above all we proceed by way of thought.

Usually when we have a great deal of attachment, we usually serve our attachments. What we do is in the service of our attachment. And the strongest attachment that we have is our attachment to our physical bodies. For example also when one speaks of politics, people speak of a struggle for

chod, attachment, offering of the body, merit food and for clothing for example. This means loving your physical body. Loving your physical body is not bad in itself. But it can become a basis for creating an attachment which is a problem.

For example when a person has disturbances in their physical body and we try heal the body, people may try every possible means including medicines. At times you are very disturbed, and instead of resolving the situation, he may aggravate it or create new problems. Thus proceeding by logic, just as we may make our illness worse by all of our attempts to heal it, so thinking that we do ourselves good by attachment to our body good, we make harm for ourselves by increasing attachment. In practice the chod begins with this attachment to our physical body, and proceeds to the overcoming all attachment.

Page 25 is the fundamental part of the practice. There are two aspects. On the one hand, there is the state of consciousness of the individual who is practicing which transfers itself into space and manifests itself as Dorjepamo (rdo rje phag mo). You should not think of it as a divinity who is in some sense exterior to ourselves. But this Dorjepamo is our state manifesting itself. Out state has come forth and manifested itself as Dorjepamo. And we find before it our body without consciousness.

And then we make an offering of this body. This is considered a means to truly overcome attachment and simultaneously to accumulate good actions. When we say the accumulation of merit, the first thing we speak of is gift giving. And if one takes gift giving to the very level of one's body, one finds oneself in this condition of overcoming attachment.

At the end the gift must be recognized, the second to last line on page 26, "He who offers, he who receives, and the offering are in the state of Dzogchen beyond any limit." Here we go beyond to the level that is called the accumulation of wisdom. Normally when we speak of the accumulation of wisdom, if one is capable, it means finding oneself in, or continuing in, the primordial state of consciousness. Even if one is not fully capable thereof, one is at least capable of being in the state of fixation or of shinay. Because this is the way to realization.

When we speak of accumulation of merit, all this is relative to the body, voice, and mind. With the body people do prostrations for example. And these and other actions are considered as good actions of the body. And the same with the voice. For example, many say prayers and will recite some mantra for purification. For the mind above all we have what is called compassion, good intentions towards others. These are all of the fundamental bases of the accumulation of merit.

But the truth is that all these are rather governed by the mind. And they are always based on having good intentions. When there is no good intention, it is very difficult that something should be a good action. Today, nowadays, there are many people who rather than having a good intention do what seem good actions out of the intention of doing a show, making a spectacle, of themselves.

Two years ago I went to Switzerland where there is a

judgment, fanaticism, guruyoga

Tibetan Institute. There were some western monks. And when we arrived to visit that temple, some came running to do prostrations in front of us. What they were in effect doing was putting on a show for us. And with things of that type, there are many people who are truly fanatics of practice and of the teaching. Instead of trying to understand a little meaning of the teaching, they create groups and organizations, exactly like people in politics create parties.

The teaching is in order to overcome one's limitations. There cannot be a teacher who rather than telling you to overcome your limitations tells you to limit yourself. In this way many people instead of doing themselves good ruin themselves. Again many people pursue the practices or follow the teachings out of sympathy, out of affection. "I belong to such and such a group" or "I am a disciple of this master", acting out of sympathy or affection. What they actually are doing is worsening their condition as individuals.

It is not important if one judges as better or worse, but it is very important that, rather than judging, one observe oneself a little. Because if we are involved in some kind of politics or some kind of power trip or some kind of economic activity or just organizing for its own sake, it is better to go right into worldly things and do them under their own name. Because none of this has anything to do with realization and freeing oneself from one's limits.

If one is truly moving towards the teaching, you have to try to better yourself. If there is a value, make use of it. If you don't see any value in it, nobody obliges you to follow it. It is not true that the teaching is valuable only if people group together. At times they don't even understand what is being taught.

For example, let's say somebody is following the Sakyapa school. There may be a Sakyapa teacher who is doing an initiation and someone may simply not have understood the principle of what was being done. Or there may have been some teaching given and the person just didn't understand the sense of what he heard. Thus this person is simply a fanatic of mere words. And this is really too bad, because when something like this happens, nothing is gained, neither for the teaching nor for the person. For this reason, it is very important that you observe yourself and that you use what you understand.

In the Dzogchen teaching there is a type of guruyoga for example. The masters who are truly expert in Dzogchen teach us to do a guruyoga which is the union of all masters. And that does not mean the union of all Dzogchen masters only. It could perfectly well include some teacher who has been a teacher to you who is not even a Buddhist. It is of no importance whether he is a Buddhist or not. What is important is one's own realization. In this case I have to have awareness. I have to have awareness and know who I have followed, who I have learned from, what teachings have been given.

People are very limited. When one does a guruyoga and if one follows the Kagyudpas for example, one does some kind of guruyoga with a form of Milarepa, or Naropa, or Marpa, for example. It is sort of obligatory to demonstrate that you are

guruyoga, transmission, compassion
Kagyudpa. This same is true of what the Nyingmapas do. The same is true of the Sakyapas and the Gelugpas.

These things of course can also be tradition, but a practitioner must never be limited in this way. If he limits himself in this way, it is worse for him. Because human beings have always been used to living in limited fashion. We can very well see it if we go to a monastery. The first thing that they want to tell you is what sect it is. Many Tibetans who don't know me first of ... [blank page] questions and think in this way you can find your answers. Finally, if you do some practice, this could really become something serious for you. This is not something programmed but it is something very important to live.

When it is said that someone is giving a teaching, perhaps many people think "What kind of teaching does he give? From what kind of book does he teach? Of what tradition is he?" Many people have these kinds of expectations. But I'm not good at that kind of thing. I do as I learned from my teacher. And I learned that that way of doing the book and so forth is not a true way. Thus I can inform people who are really interested in the teaching about these things.

If however what your really like is something intellectual, you would do better to go to a book. You could study some philosophy, something of that kind. I don't think that I have to give you that kind of thing. Because when I do a little teaching, I feel myself somewhat responsible to make people understand. Otherwise all it is is wearing myself out. I am not very pleased to just wear myself out for no reason. Nor do I have a passion to chatter and chatter of these things.

Many people have a goal that they are pursuing, for example being a great monk. But I don't have any such aim. I am not of the same mind. I am contented when a person has understood something. And I am displeased when a person has not understood something. I seek as much as possible to make people understand. It is not always easy to understand. But at times it does happen that people understand quite a bit. This is the principle of the teaching.

So if one is not just pretending to teach, but if one actually explains something, the other person may actually understand something. Transmission means that the other person must have actually understood. Then when the person has understood, the goal has been reached.

When we speak of performing good actions, and we speak of the great compassion, what is this great compassion really? The great compassion in fact is that one is capable of transmitting to another person. This is the result, an outcome, of compassion. Until one is able to do this, everything is provisional. When you see somebody for example who is suffering from starvation, and rush to that person, and give him some food, this is a merely temporary provisional solution.

Because his hunger has a cause. Perhaps he may not know how to work. He may not have the capacity to earn his living. So it is insufficient just to give him a piece of bread. But you have to have a principle of understanding to help that person discover the cause of his predicament. If he has been

compassion, participation

able to discover that, then from that moment that person becomes able to gain his daily livelihood. That is what we speak of as real or final helping. And that is the symbol of compassion.

And it is the same for a teacher. It is not just giving a talk. The point is to try to help people understand a bit. It is not sufficient just that the person who is speaking or teaching explains a little. The interested people have to participate on their own. They have to try to understand. And they have to enter into the concept which is being spoken of. In the teaching of Dzogchen, you are never told that you have to accept something. But you are told to observe. "To observe" means to open yourself. If I don't open myself, I can't understand the teachings for example. And this is the way in which you try to do your best.

This evening I can't say more than this. Perhaps tomorrow I can say some more if I am feeling better. If you don't want to leave immediately, and some of you would like to do some yantra yoga, that would be a good thing. You mustn't only think that somebody must be talking and you're listening. You have to be a bit active. The Dzogchen teaching says that a practitioner must be active in regard to the teaching. It means that a person must participate and do something.

It is not like when a group of people go to the monks and the monks do what is called "receiving honor", and the lay people who go there are the ones who give the honor. In such a circumstance, a group of monks carries out some kind of ritual. And a group of lay people go there to make offerings and to make a prayer, but not to participate. This is what is called passivity. And in regard to the teaching, it must never be like that. It must never be like the Tibetans who go to masters with offerings, visit a teacher, and get a blessing, and are happy. They're satisfied and off they go. This is what is called passivity.

People just expect to receive something. Maybe they get some benefit. It is possible. But you don't arrive at realization through passivity. Since we say that human birth is important, knowing this you have to utilize your human condition a little. If someone is so stupid that they don't understand anything, then there is nothing to be done. But man can understand. He knows how to reason. And he intends good for himself. So it is better to be somewhat active about the teaching. So it is insufficient to just hear and listen. You also have to practice. Therefore if you want to do some yantra yoga, it would be a good thing. Okay.

There is a way of seeing the teaching in general when it's taught by someone. It is considered that a certain master is responsible for the teaching. People think like that, but it's not true. Because the teaching is an inheritance which all human beings received. But we are human beings who don't know ourselves or our humanity. Because we know we are human. But it may be that the teachings are also an inheritance of other beings, non-human beings. We don't know.

If it is so important, then every one of us must be responsible. If I am a practitioner I am responsible. It is not

responsibility, participation

necessary that I have a title or somebody gives me the duty. It would in fact be false to say that somebody is the boss and somebody is responsible for the teachings and somebody has the official task of safeguarding or whatever. You have to know that those who truly are responsible are the practitioners.

If I put on some costume, it means that I feel cold. I have to protect my clothes, my garments, in order to use them. This is my responsibility. If I have to cross the river, I may have to have a boat. I mustn't break up my boat. It is also in my interest in order to arrive at the other side of the river. Therefore, it is necessary that each one of us has his responsibilities.

Now I want to repeat what I said yesterday that a person who is interested in the Dzogchen teachings must be active. Active means that one must practice, that one does something, and not that one is passive as is usually done. People hear that some famous teacher arrives in the city. They rush off to receive illumination. This means passivity. In truth the blessing that they may get does not change anything. One may go hundreds of times to receive blessings. I do not say that there is no benefit. I am not saying that. It is possible that there may be some minimum benefit.

But man is much better, higher, than a cat or a dog. When we speak of awareness, we speak of the preciousness of human birth. This means that the human being knows what to do and how to do it. The human being is capable of following and practicing the teaching. In that case you should try to understand the meaning of the teaching and to be active instead of passive with regard to the teaching.

As I have said other times, Buddha says "I am teaching you. But it all depends upon you." These words are very important and it is the truth. If you do not participate, if you do not practice, Buddha cannot do anything for you. Buddha cannot bless you to realization. Nobody is better than Buddha.

So there has to be some more awareness. Even if you go to a master, you must know what it is you are going to him for, what you have to find there. Also you have to observe yourself a little. Why am I going? What am I looking for? When one has this principle, then one will receive a response to one's needs. Otherwise as the Tibetan proverb has it "Everything changes its color when the season changes. But the dog's nose remains as it is always. It does not depend on the season."

This is exactly the same as what happens to people who remain passive. This in my opinion is extremely important for western people to understand, at least for those who are trying to follow the teaching. Instead of trying to understand the meaning of the teachings, many become great followers of Tibetan tradition. That is fine to do if what one is motivated by is the desire, the sympathy, to save Tibetan tradition. If what you are trying to do is to realize yourself, then the situation is a bit different. So there has to be a bit of awareness of yourself.

In the teachings of Dzogchen, they speak constantly of the importance of awareness in every sense, above all, in daily life which is understood also as practice. Normally,

awareness, laziness, advertising they say "Try to practice with all your strength". When you do not feel like practicing, it is treated like a kind of manifestation of the devil that you have to struggle with to overcome it. This is how they normally teach.

But in Dzogchen this is not how it is. Because you have to be aware, and awareness means if a person does not feel something at that moment, if he does not feel like it, there is a reason. And there is no reason to go suffocating oneself in that reason. If I suffocate myself today and tomorrow, maybe I get two or three days of practice out of it by suffocating myself.

But what counts is for the future. In this case there is a need for awareness and to leave oneself space. If one says "I do not feel like practicing" then he has understood the cause or there could be another reason. And one has to deal with and overcome the cause itself. Many people say "Is that how you leave space?" They say "If you leave space like that, you will never defeat your laziness." But that is not how it is.

The principle is that you must discover the cause. The cause might be something like laziness. And awareness of impermanence is what one needs to overcome laziness. When one has this knowledge of the cause, then what one does in one's practice becomes something true, not false. If it is not true, it will fail and that is why you need awareness.

Because, you see, in the Dzogchen teachings, it is not considered that one should make advertising for example. No, there is not even one request that one do advertising or be a missionary. The reason is to not constrain or impose on people, to not condition people. But if you want to give people advice or information, that is quite different from making advertising, publicity, or being a missionary. Clearly the Buddhist style in general certainly has its justifications for becoming missionaries. They speak a great deal of spreading Buddhism. They speak of places where the teaching does not exist or does not thrive as dark places that have to be illumined by the teaching.

At times this type of thing becomes constraining. I do not mean that there is necessarily a person behind you with a club. But there are many ways of constraining a person, and so that is one of the reasons why a person should not let himself be conditioned by anything. He must only inform a person, that is, one must let oneself be informed and one must proceed on to discover oneself. For these reasons, the Dzogchen teachings never favored a means of diffusion which involves constraint. These things I say to you because there are people interested in the teachings. You need to know these things.

This evening is the last evening, last day. I want to explain what remains of the semzin. And also I want to explain a bit in general, and first some introductory words. As we have been a few days here in this town, we've been very few people. But I don't feel that I am more happy if there are more people. It pleases me to have people here who are really trying to understand something. It seemed to me that some have been following, have really tried to understand, and

fixation, retreat

this gives me pleasure. And I also hope that you've understood a bit because the principle of the teaching is to communicate and to understand.

What I principally explained was the two fundamental things: how to apply one's practice to the day, or to bring practice into daily life, and how to practice in the night. This in a sense is the conclusion. Because the teaching must proceed concretely. "Concretely" means that it must correspond to our daily life as it really is. In life there is both day and night. There has to be awareness of this. Thus one must know well how to practice both in the day and in the night.

As regards practicing in the day, first thing is that it is very important to prepare. And preparation must be done when you find a bit of time. When for example we do a few days of retreat, you must know that retreat has the purpose of preparing us for daily life. For example, if somebody must learn to swim in water, before diving into the water he must have a bit of preparation. Then when he dives into the water he is already ready. He knows how to move.

This is the same with daily life. There exist many problems and one has to know how to face them and know how to overcome them. And for this purpose, one needs a bit of practice, and above all, a practice which involves doing some retreat. If one has to do some practice of shinay, it is not easy to do that practice among people, or for example while one is working.

So these are situations which demand that the practitioner find some free time to prepare. All of us always have lots to do. But it is still very possible to find the time to do a retreat of one or two or three weeks. For example, in the course of a year you can find that. Nor is it said that you must do it every year. But it is very important at least at the beginning to find a bit of time.

And thus you must do these practices which I have explained, above all that which is called fixation with an object which takes you to fixation without an object. And when you find for yourself the state of shinay, you don't stop and remain in shinay. Because if you remain drowsy in shinay, it is the same as the traveller who has fallen asleep halfway to his destination. If one falls asleep on the road, one doesn't arrive where one is going.

Thus shinay must be dissolved. If you don't know how to dissolve the state of shinay, then you must never think that shinay takes you to the practice of Dzogchen. It is still insufficient. Rather you have to link the shinay with daily life. This is not just for saying words. This actually must happen in practice. You have to train by action with body, voice and mind. When you have arrived at this level, then one can say that one is not obliged to do a retreat.

So when we say retreat, we're saying that a retreat is necessary above all for doing the practice of shinay, of fixation on an object. But you must never do any practice whatever it may be, suffocating and forcing yourself. The practice must be ideal. And to do that you must alternate one practice with another so you don't feel forced. For example when you do shinay there isn't much to do. We're used to

preliminaries, five capacities doing something. After you force yourself for two or three days, you'll surely feel yourself tired. You will have suffocated yourself. Forcing yourself in such a way is not awareness.

Thus it is very useful to do practices which also link with the body, voice, and mind. Above all, when you practice shinay, it is very very important to do some practice of the body, particularly for example, the vajra position. The practices which I gave you of body, voice, and mind are considered the inner ngondro of Dzogchen. But ngondro is not like some kind of certificate that permits you entry or obliges you to do something. It is something to be utilized when necessary.

We know for example that the practice of Vajrasattva, the characteristics of this particular practice come from the Kriya tantra. the system of Kriya tantra is not Dzogchen but the practitioner of Dzogchen utilizes this method for purposes of purification. This is what we call ideal. One who is without limits knows how to utilize what is available. You use things when they are useful and where they are useful. Thus this ngondro can be used even if a person is already doing high practice.

Normally people think that if one hasn't done the ngondro one can't do certain other practices. People imagine that the ngondro is like a ticket. You can't get into the theater without it. But it's not like this because the teaching is not a bureaucracy. If you are proceeding with the teachings at this level, it means you haven't understood. The teaching is to better the human being. If you want to better the human being you have to see what the situation and condition of the human being is. You have to see what the capacities of this human being are.

For example in the Dzogchen teaching, to have a possibility of following the Dzogchen teachings, you speak of people who possess superior capacity. Superior capacity means that one possess five capacities. Superior capacity does not mean that one is already a realized being. Many people think that. The say Dzogchen is a very high teaching and therefore it is only useful to realized beings. This is said by many many people in traditions like the Sakyapa and Gelugpa schools. It's not an insult. It is their way of seeing things. Because their method is very very gradual. If you follow the gradual path, you also have to justify it in some way. And therefore they explain that certain things have to be done in a certain order.

But you have to remember that the Dzogchen teaching is not at all a gradual path. When we say that it is not a gradual path, you must not think that it is a teaching only for realized beings. Because when you are a realized being you don't need the teaching anymore. And you must also remember that Dzogchen is also the way. If it is a way to realization, it means that it is useful to a person who is not yet realized. Dzogchen can be practiced by anyone, but it must be a person who possesses the five capacities. These capacities it is said are a must.

First is that the individual possesses the desire or will to practice. The second capacity is that of diligence. The

five capacities

third is the presence of awareness. The fourth is that he does meditation. He applies meditation. And the fifth is what is called intelligence. It is important to understand clearly that intelligence does not mean the quality of being a philosopher or scholar. It simply means the capacity to understand what is taught.

These capacities for receiving the Dzogchen teaching don't mean that one is necessarily born that way. But rather it is perfectly possible that one perfects oneself and trains oneself in these capacities. For example a very lazy person is not diligent. In this case one would seek to become diligent. The reason the person is not diligent is above all that one does not have a lively sense of impermanence.

For example someone who doesn't understand the teaching may be that the person doesn't understand the dialect. For example one uses many strange words and if a person is not accustomed to that he may not understand the words. Or at times you are dealing with a person who just doesn't understand the language. Or there may be lack of understanding between person and person. Above all the master or teacher may be a person who doesn't know how to communicate, and thus the other person will find it very difficult to understand.

For example normally we have a rather monastic tradition. When a teaching is explained, the explanations normally are given at a rather intellectual level. This type of teaching or explanation a Tibetan peasant, for example, would never understand. What does that mean? That means that that type of master who is giving an explanation is not capable of explaining. He may at best be capable of showing and exhibiting his knowledge of philosophy.

I will give a very concrete example. Some years ago I went to Switzerland. There was a meeting of young Tibetans. They had invited a monk from the Tibetan Institute there. That monk did not have a bad intention, but he was accustomed to his own way of doing things, which is the way of the monasteries. He gave an explanation of the four noble truths of Buddhism. Now I was in the monastic colleges for many years. I studied Buddhist philosophy. I understood very well when that monk spoke.

But afterward when the meeting was over, I asked among these young Tibetans a little of what they had understood. They had understood nothing. Not a single one of them had understood anything. This is the level at which they proceed. When things go that way, we don't call that transmission. Because a transmission has to be understood. In this case it is extremely important that there be awareness on the part of the teachers.

For example if a master has awareness about his students, he can always find the possibility of communicating and transmitting. In that case you cannot establish limits between people who might be called less capable and people who are more capable. Since Tibetans in general are for the most part peasants, who for the most part are illiterate, for the most part they don't know how to understand the teaching. But they have much faith. Thus they go to masters hoping to receive a blessing rather than a teaching. But they have no

compassion

hope at all of understanding.

This principle is extremely important, and it is important that it be understood by western people. I've never said that western people are superior to Tibetans. That is not what I'm saying. But western people have had an education since they were little. They've had education through study. It's much easier for them to understand. And this has to be understood also by he who is transmitting.

If a person understands, really grasps, the teaching, there is nothing to reserve or keep secret. In that case, one must transmit as much as possible. When a person doesn't understand or doesn't grasp it, then the teacher must find secondary means to help that person. Giving secondary means might be that of giving him the chance to accumulate merit, or giving him certain practices of purification. Because these will slowly help better the person. Thus he must understand that Dzogchen teaching is practicable and that it's a way that can be followed by everyone.

Another very important thing. We normally speak very much about compassion, above all in the Buddhist sutras. But in truth, to have a perfect compassion, you must have a perfect awareness. If one doesn't possess this awareness, compassion becomes something formal. It doesn't become something concrete. As we said yesterday, you have to help a person. Let us say the person is in difficulty because of starvation, of hunger. The most important thing to do is to find out the cause of his problem.

The same is true of a sick person. If I have to help a person, I have to discover what is the cause of his sickness. If I don't possess this capacity and I don't have awareness of this situation, I can't perform an action which is to the benefit of this person. In this case, there cannot exist perfect compassion.

The same is true with regards to practice. We perform practice. Practice is performed in order to achieve realization above all. Normally people say we seek realization for the benefit of others. Even if you speak of the benefit of others, realization must be reached by you. Just words don't count at all. What counts is practice. If I possess awareness then what is valuable to me is also valuable to others. If I don't realize myself, it must mean that something is going wrong. This is also true for others. Thus also as regards practice, one must automatically be governed by compassion.

On this level, the teaching too must proceed on the level of compassion. This means that the teaching must live. This means that if I interest myself in the teaching, then I am also interested in and can interest others. In this case the practitioner has a responsibility toward the teaching. The world and successive generations proceed in this way. We know now what is the principle of the teaching. And others will have to know that tomorrow.

If people don't know that tomorrow, then that means the teaching will disappear. There will no longer be a teaching. If there is no teaching tomorrow, there will lack an essential element for overcoming the dualism of man. This is a responsibility of all practitioners. When this exists and I

religious systems, monasteries

don't have awareness of this situation, I can't perform an action which is to the benefit of this person. In this case, there cannot exist perfect compassion. There is also the responsibility of maintaining the teaching in its purity as it should be.

Many times people are sympathizers with the Tibetan Buddhist religion or sympathizers with Tibetan culture. But being a sympathizer with Buddhist religion or Tibetan culture and being a practitioner are two quite different things. If we're thinking about the teaching, then we're talking about a path which can liberate or realize that person. Then that path must possess the qualities which can lead to the realization. This is what we mean by real teaching.

Now when we speak of the Dzogchen teaching, Dzogchen shows itself to be an essential teaching of Buddhism. We can also say the highest teaching of Buddhism. This is true also for the school of Bonpo, that they considered that the highest level of their teaching was Dzogchen. But if one understands a bit what is the ultimate level of the teaching, and not merely Buddhism and Bonpo, then we can see that this is the essence of various and many teachings.

It's sufficient simply to notice clearly what is taught in Dzogchen. The conclusion of the path of Dzogchen, is what we call the tawa or outlook of Dzogchen, and its practice or meditation and its attitude or behavior. When these three are without limits, and do not fall into the condition of being caged, this is the principle of the teaching. The teaching itself which shows this way or path does not limit itself and therefore people cannot go and limit this teaching.

Normally human beings find themselves living in limitation. All the schools are limitations. They live within the limits of tradition, of their attitudes and habits, even down to their particular way of singing a prayer. Each of these slowly crystallizes as a form of limitation which we call a sect. The principle of Dzogchen is not this. So man must not go and try to limit the teaching. A human being must try to open his eyes and discover just what Dzogchen is and just what he is talking about and what it is talking about.

And this too must be taken into practice. You must never think that Dzogchen is something intellectual. If one went and studied Dzogchen for centuries on the intellectual level, he would never understand it, because you cannot limit Dzogchen to a mental concept. We have the measurements, criteria, of our consciousness and they are very limited and very square. And everything that we keep within that measurement, including trying to put Dzogchen within those limits, even if we consider it Dzogchen, even if it is labelled Dzogchen, it is no longer Dzogchen.

If it is Dzogchen it must have the qualifications of Dzogchen, the qualities of Dzogchen. Dzogchen is a means of opening people, to reawaken that person. This is how the Dzogchen teaching must be. Thus he who is interested in this teaching must have awareness and thus must carry on this teaching. He must not put himself into certain traditions.

When one speaks of Dzogchen, people think immediately that it's Nyingmapa. This kind of confusion is not very good. Certainly it's true that there is Dzogchen principally in the

religious systems, monasteries

Nyingmapa school because Dzogchen has the oldest tantras which exist, and the Nyingmapa school is the oldest tradition. They regard their highest or ultimate level of teaching as Dzogchen.

But Dzogchen is not a school. Dzogchen is not a sect. If one is capable of studying Dzogchen a little, if one goes ahead to learn a little about the Dzogchen tantras of the semde series, then one can finally understand what is meant by Dzogchen. This is in the interest of the person himself who is interested in the Dzogchen teaching, not just for today but also for tomorrow.

When we speak of a teaching our first interest is to speak of our realization, of our practice. But secondly, we are also always speaking of tomorrow. If tomorrow this teaching continues, then it must continue as something pure. It happens to us in general that we confuse our social situation and the teaching.

Let us look a little at Tibet. Tibet was a rather feudal country. What the Chinese say is rather true, that it was a rather closed country and conditions were rather savage for the people, rather hard for the people. And the teaching also became something which worked in favor of this state of affairs, because the monasteries are in favor of people who make offerings to them. They favor the people who protect the monasteries. And the people that the monastery favored, were the people who made the offerings and offered protection, the nobles and important people of Tibet.

When this relationship between the nobility and the monasteries was established, there arose certain systems in religious life itself which derived directly from feudal conditions, and bear their mark. But the people were not aware of this, because that seemed perfectly normal. But when you arrive in a democratic society, it is no longer normal. You find that everyone criticizes it. When you encounter such criticism it seems as if you were dealing with defects of the religion itself.

Take for example the great monasteries, the huge monasteries, in Tibet like Sera and Drepung. Drepung contained more than 10,000 monks. It meant there was an enormous monastery and people in Tibet always thought of it as a real fortress of Buddhism. But the day that the so-called democratic reform took place, the monastery virtually disappeared in an instant. That is, it collapsed completely. But when did it collapse? When it collapsed many of the people who were accusing and attacking this monastery were themselves monks of that monastery. When these people became in effect employees of the Chinese, they became ferocious anti-Buddhists.

And what does this mean in truth? It means they understood nothing of the teachings. And that famous fortress of the faith which seemed so marvelous in truth was false. If one proceeds at this level, the teaching always collapses.

For this reason, what is it that the teaching of Dzogchen teaches? It teaches to transmit and to understand really. But it does not teach us to organize or create monasteries. Why? Organization means as a practical matter, bureaucracy. A type of organization which is bureaucratic is the same as if

awareness, reincarnations

one were to build a fortress. A fortress may for the moment show itself or appear terribly strong, but this always depends on time and external conditions, when the external conditions favor this. But when the secondary causes are not present, then the institution, however strong it may seem, collapses. It collapses because it was constructed.

What is communicated in the Dzogchen teaching is the communication of awareness, and this is the way to carry the teaching forward. It is not important how the teaching is presented today. Normally people think that the teaching must present itself with many many people, but that's not the point. What it has to have is the principle of the teaching. And its principle is knowledge.

For example, two or three years ago the Dalai Lama gave initiations of the Kalachakra. It is said that between Tibetans and Indians there were more than 7000 people present. It certainly seemed splendid. If it's true that 7000 people understood something, that's wonderful. But if nobody understood anything, and nothing remains, then you see that it's very important to communicate well.

We know that a master like Milarepa for example was very famous, and has now become very well known even in the western world. Because he kept his teaching very perfect and his teaching became very widely known. But Milarepa never went among the people to spread the teachings. He never did any advertising. He never organized anything. But he communicated the teaching to some people, even if very few people. He really transmitted it and thus the results he obtained still shine in the world. It is very important that the people who follow the teachings have this knowledge.

Today when people speak of the teachings, they think of some Tibetan teachers. They think only of the Tibetan teachers who are giving this teaching and somebody says "I am a disciple of thus and thus a master. And he is something quite else". But that is not sufficient. If today I am the disciple of somebody, tomorrow it will be me who is communicating and transmitting to other people. In that case I'll have to know what to communicate. Nobody says "I want to become a master". But nature requests and demands that one also communicate to other people. Above all, if one possesses real knowledge of the teachings, then that will manifest itself.

People think that the teaching and that he who teaches it must always have a title like Tibetans have, like let's call it "reincarnation". I've heard that some Canadians now say Reposha, something like this. But I think this is not the principle. Among Tibetans there are many many people called reincarnations. But there is a principle. Because in Tibet there were hundreds and even thousands of monasteries. These monasteries had to survive. In order for a monastery to survive, they had to have a reincarnation. They had reincarnations in the interest of the monasteries, sincerely speaking. This began with the first Karmapa and the system worked like that. In concept they said reincarnations, but in practice it was a way of safeguarding the monastery. And this became widespread in all of the schools in Tibet.

Why was having reincarnations a safeguard for the

reincarnations, semzin

monastery? Because you always try to have your reincarnation have the most important name possible. If there was a practitioner or master famous in Tibet, that is the one we have to reincarnate somewhere because he is most valuable, because people will respect him more. And thus in Tibet there were many important masters, and reincarnations became ever more frequent.

I'm not saying with this that all reincarnations are like that. Sometimes the reincarnations are really true and something quite different is shown. When we say a reincarnation, it may be that he spends some time studying so there is something at work. But it does not always work like that. Many times reincarnations will rise out of personal interests, that is, advantage.

For example, in an area or region which has a large monastery, that monastery has a reincarnation. When that reincarnation dies, you can have this reincarnation be reborn amid the most powerful and useful family of that area. It's particularly true when the Tibetan government ruled central Tibet. The central government would send noblemen, great nobles, to be governors of the particular regions. Where once such a noble was ruler of a given area, if he had a son born, automatically that son would be born a reincarnation of some local monastery.

How does that happen? It would seem strange that a reincarnation would die and be reborn through attachment to noblemen. But people do things like that. Human beings proceed by their advantage and their interest. And they mix up their advantage and interest with religion and with teachings. And this is not a particularly sympathetic fact, but unfortunately this is how it worked.

In the western world too, many people are beginning to be interested in the teachings. And they follow the teachings, following some master or other. And many of these people try to get the name of a reincarnation for example, and they say "I can feel that I have been born a Tibetan monk", for example. I've heard many people like this. They make me laugh. And some teachers play their game with them, and that makes me laugh to, because this is not seriousness towards the teaching. It's when they do as he likes.

But as regards the teaching, one must maintain it in its purity. In the teaching there is nothing that has to do with worldly interests. This is also very important to understand.

Now I want to explain a bit about the remaining semzin. There is one of the semzin in which you can concentrate here between the eyebrows. You can see a little bead, white and pink. You fix on it. And it's very important when you do this type of fixation that you don't think of it as an object. Rather you have to have a sense of its presence. This is above all a way of unifying, of collecting, one's prana. If you unify the prana at this point here, this semzin could result in the manifestation of many many kinds of nyams, above all, nyams having to do with prana.

There is another type of semzin. You concentrate on three channels, three straight up and down channels. Generally when we speak of the channels we say that the solar and lunar channels are linked to the nostrils. This naturally

semzin

for reasons for breathing. Here there is nothing that has to do with the practice of breathing. It is not important to link these channels with your nostrils. Rather there have to be three straight channels.

All three channels finish at the crown of the head, just as if they were three pipes. And they are linked together just under the navel. Then you concentrate on the right and left channels in their upper part. In their upper part, there are two light spots or beads, one red, one white, solar & lunar. Slowly these two balls descend down the channels and they arrive at a meeting place at the point where the channels unite. You hold your breath at that point and you concentrate on these two balls which now finds themselves in the central channel. You repeat this again, perhaps five or six times.

And you slowly carry these two united balls up the central channel and then at a certain moment, when you feel these two balls arriving in the central channel towards the heart or towards the center of your body, at that point you sound the PHAT strongly and these balls disappear. After this sounding of the PHAT, you remain as we have at other times when we practiced the PHAT. And like this you repeat this practice.

Now there is another semzin. You concentrate on something like a little white ball on the tip of your nose. With the exhalation of breath the ball moves away. As you inhale it returns. Again you exhale. It goes away again. You repeat this. When you are used to this, accustomed to this, you let it move away as much as possible with the exhalation. If you practice this semzin a great deal, this leads you particularly to a state in which you are not disturbed by thoughts. If in the moment that you are practicing, you feel yourself very agitated and you have many thoughts, it's good to do this semzin practice.

Here is another semzin. You concentrate on your own body as a transparent body of light. And you remain with a sense of the presence of this body of light. If you have difficulty doing this practice, then you have to do certain practices which are called the zernga ('dzer lnga), practices of the elements. I'm not going to explain these right now. Those of you who are interested may find some transcripts where I have given many explanations of that. This semzin practice of which I am speaking is also for developing one's clarity.

Here is another semzin. As we have said about the practice of the morning when one awakens, one may find the presence of the white A or AH. From that AH arises another AH which one sends off into space. And that AH in space disappears slowly. That is to say, it moves every farther away into space. This semzin is the same. It is just that you repeat it. You concentrate on the AH again. If the concentration doesn't work well, it may be also very useful to sound the AH. Because sounding the sound helps a great deal with one's concentration or visualization.

Here is another semzin. You have to do practice with sound. That is, you don't pay attention to the pleasantness or unpleasantness of the sound that you hear in your ear. That's not the point. But you are in the presence of that

semzin

sound, and you try to find yourself in the state of the presence of that sound without limiting yourself.

Normally, when one practices with sound, one may find many different nyams of sound. You may hear normal sounds, but then some particular sound. Or you might hear the sound of the vajra for example. Or you might think you are receiving certain messages, communications. There must be the awareness, however, that all these are nyams. You mustn't make a problem of it. "Problem" means that you have attachment to it. Then it becomes a problem.

Here is another semzin. You can concentrate on a thigle at the center of the body. "Thigle" means a colored sphere. If someone among you has more experience of this, then you can concentrate that at the very center of that thigle is a figure of Samantabhadra.

At the beginning, naturally, you have to think about all of these semzin. And at the beginning you have to try to make them clear. When you've obtained clarity, then you have to find the sense of the presence of this. And having this sense of presence, you then relax. If you are not relaxed, it doesn't become a means to help you make progress in shinay.

The real purpose of all of the semzin is to help you progress in shinay. If we say for example, that in a semzin you have to concentrate on the figure of a divinity, the significant point is not to concentrate on the figure. This image is a message but the purpose of this image is not for its own sake. It is to help carry you towards the practice of the continuity of shinay.

When we speak of the path of transformation, there are hundreds of different ways of visualizing divinities. In the case of the path of transformation it is extremely important to create the divinity, the visualization. Because your aim there is the way of transformation.

The semzin are not like that. The semzin are a device to not be mistaken in your shinay, and to help you be able to proceed on this level. If we say that it is something very difficult to explain, but that rather than explaining you must do it, then you have to find a means of understanding. If you don't have a means, it is very difficult to arrive at it.

Thus in Dzogchen, it's really important to have all the types of semzin. You must also remember that the semzin are not like a gradual path on which you obligatorily must use all of the different semzin. But it's important to have awareness of these semzin. One of them may be useful today. But another of them may turn out to be very useful next year. The practice has to proceed in terms of our condition or situation.

There is another semzin of which one says that it proceeds on the level of gradual shunyata. It's a bit in the sutra style, that is, with the mind. You chop things into many pieces and then they disappear. For example I see a flower. I divide it by the petals and I divide its stalk into many pieces. Now there are lots of little tiny pieces. And I chop this further up, and now there is nothing like what was a flower. And then finally there remains nothing. We can do all this through the mind which divides up everything and at the end there remains nothing.

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analyses, teachings

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...And thus when everyone goes to analyze the Buddha's teaching, they do it according to their own way of seeing. "Analysis" means to follow the movement of the mind. The mind is something limited. And this functioning of the mind is found in time. And then accompanied by the functioning of our senses, we do all our analyses. And then as we see, as we think, we justify things in this way.

And if we look at things in this way, what we are doing is developing and deepening an analysis at the level of the mind. And let's say I haven't become as profound in analysis as Nagarjuna, for example. But if I become a disciple of Nagarjuna, I can learn how to do that. And through that I can develop my ability to analyze. And then at a certain point, you can say that I've become a pandit. I have a great power of analysis. I can write. I can explain. But this doesn't mean that this is what the Buddha taught.

And so it's very important for us to discover what our real way of looking at things is. And so we're always thinking and talking in this way. But it always remains at the dualistic level. And thus we always end up in a mess in regard to the teaching. And not understanding, we say "This teaching is better than this. This teaching is worse than this other." And thus we also are confused about different teachers and their relation.

The idea is not that the teaching should dominate the individual. But the idea is that the teaching is to open and develop the individual. But it's not that the teaching is an object that the person follows, but the teaching is given for the individual. This teaching is to dissolve all of this confusion.

Let's say I have some illness or problem. Naturally I look to find what's going to resolve that problem. And there can be many things which can resolve this problem. The fundamental thing is not those means, but what you have to discover is what your condition is. When you don't understand this, then the teaching just becomes a means to condition yourself. Then people think that masters are giving a bunch of limited teachings. According to me, it's not very important how to learn a certain kind of practice, a certain technique.

But it is more important to understand what the teaching is really about. And if we don't understand this, then things are always going to stay the same. Nothing is going to change. That is, the result of the teaching is just how an aspect of the person manifests itself. It's not some extraordinary vision or manifestation of a deity or something like that. But it's more that you begin to notice the lessening of attachment in oneself. There's the diminution of confusions in oneself. Everything becomes controllable, easily controllable, in oneself. And this is a result of practice, and of one's knowledge.

If you don't understand the real meaning of the teaching, when it's considered as a means to do some kind of technique or practice, even if you do this, nothing much is going to change. And this is always like the Tibetans say "the nose of a dog." That is, the dog's nose doesn't change. It's always

the same color.

And so to change your mind doesn't resolve much. Sometimes we say "Oh that person has changed their idea. That person is acting in a different way." But you can change all the time. Today I change one way, the next day another. It can always be like this because change is infinite. "To change" means that you look at some object and judge it. And then you can judge it in a different way.

However, the point is to discover where this comes from. But when you know where this judging comes from, then it becomes something that's controllable. And when it becomes controllable, then you are no longer conditioned by this. But now, it's not a case of changing. But then we have a different kind of manifestation of aspects of the individual. And that is, when we practice, what we find is a lessening of attachment.

And so in the Dzogchen teaching we say that the principle is not to meditate, but it's the way of seeing, tawa (lta-ba). And so the principle is the way of seeing, that is, to discover ourselves. And this is the fundamental key also to understand the teaching. And thus when you don't understand the way in which things come from ourselves, then you see the teaching in all these different ways. And also when we don't understand well, then everything can also seem the same. So when we understand well, we can also see that each teaching has its particular characteristics.

Now we know that each teaching has its tawa, gompa (bsgom-pa), chodpa (spyod-pa), for example. That is, the tawa is the way of seeing. Gompa is the way of doing practice. Practice means to apply this knowledge, this way of seeing. This means that there's a way to integrate ourselves with this way of practice, our own condition with this way of practice. And so each teaching has its particular characteristics. Now why are there these different characteristics? Because there are different types of people.

Let's take the example of Sutric Buddhism, whether it's Hinayana or Mahayana. In the Mahayana Sutras the way of seeing is principally to discover what is called illusion. What is this illusion based on? What is it linked to? It's linked to cause and effect, what's called karma. And the way of seeing, the tawa, is based principally on the notion of karma. The method to overcome this condition is meditation which finds a state of calm, tsechigpa (rtse-gcig-pa).

What they talk about mostly is shunyata, void. This is something that can be understood by a normal person. Let's say we know about concrete things, material things, and for all this we have a great attachment. And this is what we call our karmic vision. That is, we don't understand that it's a karmic vision, but we understand that this is really an object and this is really a subject. That is, we take it to be concretely real. And we're always involved in accepting it or abandoning it, getting rid of it.

And this is what karma means. This is our relative condition. Creating this karmic vision, we continue to transmigrate. And from this concrete belief, all attachments arise. And thus, accepting and rejecting, we continually create karma. And thus the Buddha began to explain that such

karma, illusion, non-ego

and such is the operation of karma, and it's not real. He taught various ways to understand this unreality, for example, the method of impermanence.

All of that which is talked about in these four awarenesses was to make people understand slowly, very slowly, that this karmic vision is not real. And even if we see in this way and we live within this, still our way of seeing and our belief is illusory. This is the way in which they all teach. Now when you really discover that this karmic vision is illusion, that is, the illusoriness of subject and object, what's left at the end is shunyata, void. That is, this is something that's analyzable, something that we can understand with our intellect.

Let's say a simple object like this. I say "It's not real". Now it's not a very easy thing to say "This is not real." It's something I can touch. It's something that I can eat. And by eating it I can get rid of my hunger. But what I have to understand is that everything is illusory, not just this. That is, if this is an illusion, then also so am I. Illusion means I'm touching something illusory. An illusory person is eating something illusory, and that's getting rid of an illusory hunger. All is within this illusory condition. And we come to understand this through understanding one thing. And with this example we can understand the other thing.

And thus in the Sutras they talk about the famous dagmaypa (bdag-med-pa), non-ego of individuals and all phenomena, all dharma. The Hinayana is considered a less high teaching, and the Mahayana a higher teaching, within Sutric Buddhism. But this is not like a classification in which one is less important and the other is more important. More important or less important is relative to the individual, and whether they understand or not. That is, less important means for those people who don't have the capacity to understand.

In this case they talk about the non-ego a lot. That is, in this case it's much easier to understand the non-ego of oneself rather than of objects. Because first of all we're concerned with "I". Everything starts with "I". And from the "I" we create the idea of others. For example, they do an analysis "Where is this I found." Now, not only does the Hinayanist do this, but the Mahayanist, and also the Tibetans have this kind of system. They say "Okay, why don't you look for a few days and see where this I is to be found." Above all in the Gelugpa school, they do a lot of this kind of analysis.

They search for the "I" and they don't find anything. And when they come to this knowledge, they call this gangzaggi dagmay (gang-zag-gi bdag-med), the absence of any person. There's this concept in which they say the Arhat, the Hinayanist, understands the gangzaggi dagmay, this absence of any kind of person.

But beyond this there's also the absence of any kind of self to phenomena. Now it's not important to analyze how much the Arhat has understood, whether he's just understood the absence of self of persons or the complete absence of self, or whether he's done it partially or whatever. This is not important. This kind of discussion becomes important when one

illusion, void, time regards the teaching as an object. But for us it's still important to have an idea of this because it exists. The teaching is done in this way.

And the Buddha said that all of this illusion comes from the "I" and from that comes all dharma. Thus one does this analysis of all the parts of the body until one discovers that you can't find this ego. And in the same way one analyzes an object, and one divides it mentally into all its pieces, until one can't even find the name for this object anymore. And they say everything is false, just like a rosary or like a forest. We have the concept of a rosary. But when we divide the rosary up into one bead by one bead, the idea of a mala disappears. In the same way, with a forest, if you go into a forest and say "This is a tree. This is not a forest. This is a tree. This is not a forest." Where's the forest?

All things are aggregates. But from this we get the idea of things. So then we discover this, and the way in which it's discovered is through logic, through the mind. And when one studies philosophy one thinks "This is a very intelligent way of going about the teaching. This is a very high method." But when it comes to real knowledge of the teaching, this is not too profound an understanding. This is solely a mental analysis as if the teaching was an object.

Now for people who cannot understand more than this, cannot understand beyond this, they enter into this type of mental analysis. And this is all based upon the capacity of our senses. They do this kind of analysis until they reach the level of shunyata, or void. And it was at this level that the Buddha taught the Sutras.

Now why did the Buddha teach them this way? The Buddha came to the world to teach in this way. Because he was born as a material human being with blood, bones and all that. Thus he met with Indian people and he began to speak in their language. Thus he entered into the way in which human beings analyze things, that which they are capable of doing. Thus until one reaches the level of shunyata, one engages in this kind of analysis. In this case, how can you talk about it being a superior or an inferior teaching? It's a teaching characteristic of human beings.

But the teachings are not just for human beings. There are other types. When we talk about a teaching like the Kriyatantra, they say that the Buddha Shakyamuni gave this teaching in some kind of god realm. But for us this is a whole other thing. So for us human beings with material bodies, it's not so easy for us to fly up into an immaterial god realm. And our human being is limited. It's material, limited in time.

When scientists talk about light coming from the stars they say "Oh it takes many many centuries for this light to arrive. Since we hardly live that long, we don't have too much hope to have direct contact with the stars." This is our limitation in time and matter.

But there exists a way of being outside the limitations of time. There is a dimension in Tantrism which is called *dushti nyampanid* (*dus-bzhi mnyam-pa-nyid*), the union of the four times. This means "not limited in time". And when one is not limited in time, one is also not limited by distance.

deity representation, teaching titles

Thus there's another way of seeing, another way of being, another possibility of being. Thus they say that the Buddha taught this in this realm of the deities, but it also exists in the human world at the same time.

But we have our totally other way of seeing. In this case there's another way of seeing. It's not that the Buddha taught here or taught there and he brought this teaching back from this realm of the gods to talk here. There's a painting done of the Buddha's biography. They do ten or twelve thankas. So they say for example in one of them, that one summer the Buddha went to this realm and then he returned. And in this picture they'll show the Buddha actually descending on a beautiful staircase from this realm. And the faithful think "Oh how marvelous. The Buddha went up into the sky and now he's coming back down again."

But if you think about this a bit, you can't even say that the realm of the divinities is in the sky. You could think that if he went up on a flight of stairs, how many stairs might there have been? How many steps did he have to take to reach this realm? This is just symbolic. And so when something doesn't enter within our limits, then it becomes awfully complicated for us. So then you try to give something simple for us to understand. In this case there's this symbol of some stairs going up into the sky.

And when we have to make a representation of a deity, we do it in terms of our ideas. Let's take the example of Samantabhadra. What have we done? We've made a figure of a nude human being. And in the case of some kind of manifestation, what have we done? We've taken a human form. We've added a couple of arms, a couple of legs. Or we've made some kind of strange face on it. And in this case we don't even have a good idea of how we should make this strange face.

Thus we read in the descriptions in the Tantras that the deity has the face of a lion or of a dragon or of a pig. Really there's no reason why it really is a lion or a pig, for example. But the reason is that we can't understand anything other than it's like a lion or like a pig. It's not that the Sambhogakaya manifestation is limited. It's that we're limited. Because we just don't understand these things. So whenever we have teachings that have different levels, right away we put it within our measurement of things.

Now let's take a teaching like Dzogchen. We have to say that the Dzogchen teaching is a very high teaching. And thus right away we think that this is a very special teaching. It's not like Hinayana. But what's happening here? The truth is that we're putting this within our way of measuring. That is, whether Dzogchen is special or not, has nothing to do with Dzogchen. It's our way of looking at it. And all teachings are like this. And all the methods of the teaching are like this. And it's very important we understand this. And when we don't understand this in regard to the teaching, we find we're very confused.

Now a lot of people talk about the name or title that a teaching has. And people ask "Well, what teaching are you giving?" Now certainly this is a way in which one communicates with people, because people live within their limits. And thus if you say something interesting, then

lineages, initiations
they're going to become even more interested.

For example, if we're selling soap, and one of the things that sells a lot in the western world is soap and there's always a different kind for sale. So today they're selling a soap that's very special. Then after awhile people are kind of tired of that. People expect that there's going to be a better type of soap tomorrow. Even that same soap of yesterday, even if you don't change the soap, you have to change the name and the box. And then right away people get a different feel from that soap.

Thus if you give an interesting name to a teaching, people get a more clear idea about it. However, this so-called "clear idea" that people get from the name is really nothing clear at all. You have to see that all this comes from not having a real idea of what the teaching is about.

Now it's true that in the teaching there are a lot of different methods. Moreover, there are different lineages, different positions. Above all in the western world, like in America, they talk a lot about lineages, and they give a lot of importance to this. And it's true, sometimes lineage is important. But it's important up to a point. But in the end you have to go beyond this type of limitation.

Now what does lineage mean? What it means is the way in which a method has been transmitted and has been developed, carried forward. And how does it function? There are at least two or three different functions. That is, at least it's a way in which this path, this way, can be carried forward.

I'll give an example. A young person went to India. He went to a place called Goa. He liked to smoke. He went around smoking, and he ended up finally in Nepal. It's a true story. When this young man or young woman got to Nepal, there was the Karmapa. And Karmapa was near the Chorten at Bodhi ??, and there was a gigantic ceremony going on. There were hundreds of the faithful, Tibetan and Nepalese. And he was doing his black hat ceremony. That young man didn't go there for this ceremony, but it so happened that he was there that day. And the Karmapa did this ceremony and gave the blessing.

He got a good vibration. He was already getting some vibes from the drugs, but from this he got even more. This was pretty interesting. Nothing was understood, but this was a bit interesting. ... [tape gap]... This is how the teaching can work in regard to an individual. There can be a contact made. That is, after two or three years, slowly slowly that person comes nearer and nearer to the teaching.

Now in the same way we can give another example. There can be a very well-known important person like the Dalai Lama, and he can be giving an initiation of the Kalachakra for seven thousand people. And among them, most of them might not even know what initiation means. That is, they heard that there was this saint called the Dalai Lama who was giving this interesting teaching. People go there. They feel some kind of interesting vibration. They get drawn out a little bit.

Then a few years later another teacher comes by, and they think "Ah, I know a little bit more about this interesting stuff." That is, a cause has already been planted in that person. And sometimes this is how the teaching works.

initiation, capacity of individual

But the real function is not there.

Now when we talk about the Dalai Lama giving an initiation, this is not what initiation really is. That is, an initiation is to really enter into one's own condition. In the case of the Kalachakra initiation, one understands the way in which Kalachakra manifests from one's own state. That is, the Dalai Lama can show how this is, and that with this manifestation the person can develop oneself using this example and realize oneself.

And therefore that, what we were talking about, was not the real initiation. But it still has some function. And you'll hear a lot of people saying "Well I received this teaching. I received this initiation", etc. Now all of this has some function. There's something at work there.

But there are also teachings which function more than this. In this case, the person begins to understand what the teaching is really about. That is, a person goes to eat at the table, and there's all this stuff on the table one uses to eat with. Using all of this stuff on the table, one can realize what the result is, to satisfy one's hunger.

The teaching works in the same way, whether it be the Sutra or the Tantra. It's communicated. One understands. One utilizes it. And this is why we say the teaching depends upon the capacity of the individual. And thus one says that the Dzogchen teaching is always for those of superior capacity. And they say that the Sutric teaching is for those of inferior capacity.

Now "inferior capacity" means, for example, that I show this bell to someone, and I say "This is a Tibetan bell." For a person who doesn't know how Tibetans make bells, that person can now see it. And then I can sound that bell because this is what's called a bell, something which sounds. And thus that person understands what it is, and he understands what its purpose is. That is, here's something that's common to that person and to me. It's something that's communicable. What is understood in this case is understood through the senses. The understanding of the bell has entered into the measure, the capacity, of that individual. In this case we don't say the person has a superior capacity. We say it's an inferior capacity.

But if we're talking about me communicating something that's not an object, that's not visible, already we've got something more complicated. Above all when we're talking about communicating something non-physical or non-physically, we have to make a purely verbal description, through the voice. Now in this case it's much more difficult than if we have a material thing in front of us, as for example in the case of Tantrism when we're talking about the methods of transformation. To get an idea of this we make the drawing of the mandala. And we make a drawing of the Heruka, the divinity, etc.

And since we are so used to our material way of looking at things, in this case we don't understand what a mandala means. And we can't understand what the dimension of the manifestation of the divinity means. And not understanding this, we take mandalas to the level of being some kind of art. And the divinity becomes a representation of some kind of god.

capacity of individual, transmission

And it seems like it's a teaching to make statues. And thus we go outside the teaching.

Why is this? Because when it's something that we can't touch, that's not material, it becomes something very complicated, difficult, for us. And we even think in this case that we are understanding. But we haven't really understood, because it's not easy. In this case we need a capacity that's more than the one that understands material things. And thus for Tantrism it's said one needs superior capacity.

But in the case of Dzogchen, one needs even more capacity. Because we say in Dzogchen that this is a teaching of the mind of Samantabhadra. And in this case it's not a teaching through the process of transformation.

Now when we talk about transmission, there is the gyalwa gongyud (?? rgyal-ba dgongs-brgyud), the purely mental transmission. To give us an idea of this we say that Samantabhadra purely mentally transmitted the teaching to Vajrasattva. But really we don't really understand what this means. We are really outside of this. And therefore it's not something easy to understand. In this case you really need the superior capacity.

But when we talk about the superior capacity, you shouldn't understand that from the beginning one has it, that it's already been constructed. You have to understand what is meant by the superior capacity in regard to the individual. Take the example: We have teachings from Dzogchen all the way to Hinayana. At bottom what they communicate is the same. What's not the same is the capacity and the understanding of the individuals to whom it's communicated. And thus you need different methods.

Now let's face it. We have some kind of concept that we're explaining to someone. Let's say I'm talking Tibetan. A Tibetan is going to understand this right away. Someone else who doesn't understand Tibetan needs a translation. And from Tibetan let's say it's translated into English. Then let's say there's a German there too. This German doesn't know English. Nor does he know Tibetan. Then you need a second translation from the English. Now let's say there's an Arab, who knows only Arabic, who doesn't know German or English or Tibetan, and then we need a third translation from the German. Why has this happened? Because the person doesn't have the capacity to understand those languages.

And things become quite complicated. But you can't say that what's originally communicated is something that's high or low. But all these teachings, from Dzogchen to Hinayana are the same in that they're teaching a way to discover one's own condition and to realize oneself. But because people have different capacities, everything becomes a bit complex. And this doesn't have anything to do with the teaching itself. It has to do with the individual. What we have to do as individuals is understand this condition.

If I'm a person who, we say, has inferior capacity, that is, I can't really understand, you know you have to learn how to work on yourself. Let's say I'm an Arab, and I don't know English. What one ought to do is study English or Tibetan. There's a way to work at that, since, in this case I don't

capacity of individual

have a Tibetan teacher, and in my situation there are a lot of English speakers. If I understand, I study English. If there are Tibetans around, then I study Tibetan and not English.

One lives according to one's circumstances. One has to be aware of what one's condition is. That is, one knows how to work with oneself and how to develop one's capacity. Many people say usually "Master, what kind of capacity do I have?" And if the master is not a very nice guy, he'll say "You're a bit stupid capacity." And that master will say "What you have to do is ten different ngondros (sngon-'gro)."

And in this case the person will never get to the main practice. It's not that the master is making an error, but the person himself is making an error in this case. And why is this a mistake on the part of the individual? The individual has to decide what his capacity is, not the teacher. Let's say I lack clarity. I can ask the advice of the master about this, and what kind of practice I can do to get rid of this lack of clarity. But the teacher is not deciding that I have a certain capacity, high or low. What we have to understand is what's lacking. What is our weak point?

Let's say I'm someone who likes to drink. And if I drink every day and I'm a bit drunk, and the master says "You have a low capacity", that doesn't resolve anything. But what one has to understand is that if I'm getting drunk and I'm not doing anything, I'm wasting time. And when one is able to discover this, one is then able to work with oneself. So one ought not to wait around to receive this capacity somehow.

This is very important, because a lot of people talk in that way. They say that the teaching is something that is like a stairway, that has to be ascended, and they say "You with the small amount of good fortune you have, need a teaching like Tantrism." And let's say that you follow this teaching but you don't succeed in being able to practice it.

And then you meet someone who's very much into the Sutras, and that person will say "Oh you can't do that Tantric stuff. That stuff is much too high for you. What you've got to do first is the Hinayana level, let's say for ten years. At least you have to become a monk for a few years. And then you do some purification, and when you've realized yourself at that level, then you can go on to Tantra." And a person says "That sounds good. That's right." And they go and make a kind of school based on that. This makes sense because it's necessary to go to elementary school before you can go to the middle school. And in this way one has wasted the good opportunity in which one has met the Tantra teaching.

If this happens, it is not an ideal way of going about things. It's much better to know how to work within the framework of Tantrism. And why? Because Tantrism is complete. If you lack capacity, then in the Tantric teaching there is a way to work on oneself to make up that deficiency.

So it's not necessary for you to become a Hinayanist. This is a very important point. Because it happens that many people wait around passively to get the capacity that they want. And many people say "Oh this teaching is much too high. It's not adapted for me. I've got to go for the more elementary stuff." But they're also thinking that suddenly one day that superior capacity will come to them. But that

capacity of individual, higher teachings capacity never comes even though they wait and they wait. And they finally become old and they die. And one doesn't even know whether in future lives that capacity is going to come along.

That is, the person doesn't know how to work with himself and his capacity. And therefore this way of looking at things is not right. You have to understand that there are different paths that are low and middle and high, and that it's human beings that follow these paths, and that those who are following the lower path have the lesser capacity. And this means that someone who's following the lower path has more limitations. And someone with more limits doesn't want to understand something else. It's very easy to understand this.

For example, there are a lot of Theravadins. And they just do not accept Mahayana. They say right from the beginning that Mahayana is not authentic and doesn't even exist as a Buddhist teaching. And what's more, they don't even read any Mahayana books. They even have a fear of reading this, because maybe it will convince them that it has something to it. This means that there's a self-limitation there and that these people have closed themselves. This is characteristic of what is called the lesser capacity.

As we go up to teachings that are higher and higher, what we have is people who are more and more open. One has to understand that this is the natural condition. This doesn't mean there's any defect in the teaching since the teaching has no defect whatsoever. But the teaching is followed by human beings, and it's the human beings who are limited.

Now when we're talking about the Dzogchen teaching for example, this is a teaching that is called very high. Why is it considered so elevated? Because there's nothing that's strictly defined, neither in its way of looking at things, nor in its practice, nor in its mode of comportment, behavior. There is nothing in this teaching which is regarded as not acceptable, or something to be feared. Because in this teaching what one searches for is a state beyond acceptance and rejection. Therefore we say this is a higher teaching.

Now if one knows how to understand this principle, in this case one also knows how to work on one's weak points. And one also knows in regard to the teaching what it really means. When I was with my master Changchub Dorje, I was fresh out of college. I had a very precise idea of what lineage was and what the different types of transmission were. I knew the way in which they existed in every school, in every tradition. When I received a teaching, the first thing I asked "What tradition is this? What lineage? And what is the title, the name, of this teaching?"

Now when I received these teachings and transmissions from Changchub Dorje, he said "This is the transmission of Dzogchen Semde, Longde, Upadesha, and Anuyoga" for example. I couldn't understand what he meant, because I remained within that limitation. But later I understood what he intended, what he was communicating. It's true. Dzogchen teaching is like that. That is, it's not conditioned by a particular name or lineage. So, the teaching is not important externally, but it's important for my own understanding.

The lineage is not ?? . Now just in the Dzogchen teaching

masters, obstacles

I had twelve or thirteen masters. For me, these teachers were not the same. That is, each of these masters made me understand either more or less of the teaching. But when I say this I don't mean that some teachers were better, some teachers were middling, and some teachers were less. But, what it was, it depended on my condition. It depended on the rapport between me and the teachers. It depended on my knowledge, on my secondary conditions, on my circumstances.

But what they all taught was the very same principle. And when I understood for the first time, then it all had its value. Thus all the complications disappeared. One teacher gave this, and the other teacher gave something else. Thus in the state of realization one has to unify everything into what is called the Great Thigle or the Great Mahamudra, the Great Dzogchen. In this case, how can there be different teachers, different lineages, different heads of schools, etc?

It's very important for each of us to understand this well. And this is a very important point for getting rid of our confusion. And if we don't get this understanding, we always find ourselves in limitations and we always create limitations. And in this case the teaching becomes like a crystal cage.

Even if one doesn't want this to happen, still this becomes an obstacle. Now also in the Sutric system of Buddhism, when they talk about obstacles, they talk about the obstacle of the passions and the obstacle of knowledge. When we talk about this obstacle of knowledge or the knowable, shayja dribpa ?? (shes-bya sgrub-pa), this is something that's very complex to discover, and they talk about going through the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth bhumis until one has reached the higher levels of Bodhisattva realization. The way they talk about, say, the seventh level of realization, it seems like that's already a complete Buddhahood.

But then when you go into an analysis of what the difference between the eighth bhumi and the ninth bhumi, one discovers these very subtle obstacles. And thus these very subtle crystalline obstacles, all of these kinds of obstacles pertain to the obstacle of knowledge, that shayja dribpa. And if we construct a great obstacle of the knowable like this with the teaching, then it's like making a crystalline cage for ourselves. There are kinds of cages in which even a car cannot smash through. That is a very heavy solid cage.

How does one construct this kind of cage? It's like when one says "I am of the Kagyudpa, the Nyingma, school, and I just can't take the Gelugpas." This is an example of a beautiful crystalline cage. So the best thing to do in this case is to understand that the different types of teaching are methods to help us realize ourselves. And in this case the teaching can really start functioning. There's no reason to limit oneself in regard to the teaching. If it's useful for me, if it works, it's good. There doesn't exist in the teaching a law that says I have to follow this and this.

Don't make the teaching the number one thing. The number one thing is you yourself, the person. Now look, in the Dzogchen teaching the first thing we talk about is rigpa, the state. And this rigpa is the nature, the state, of the mind. When there is the presence of this state, we call that rigpa.

rigpa, teachings

And when one is not aware of this state we call that marigpa, ignorance.

And when one doesn't understand this, what do we call that? We call that the mind, that is, that which follows objects and produces all kinds of objects, that which is found in time, that which produces karma, and that which produces the existence of body, voice, and mind. And all that is relative to our karmic world. And then the way in which we apply these things, and act on them, is what we call transmigration.

But in the teaching what we have to find is this state of rigpa, that is, our own natural condition. And when we find ourselves in this state, that aspect that we call the mind becomes completely harmonized. It becomes a quality of that state, just like the mirror and its reflection. But when one becomes a slave of the mind, this means that one is ignorant of one's own condition. And when one is ignorant of one's own condition, one doesn't find a way to find all of these things in oneself.

And thus the teaching is a way to rediscover this state. And you shouldn't take the teaching as some object that's outside, that is, where the teaching dominates the individual. The teaching is like a key. A key opens a door, and you see what's inside. So for us, the most important thing at first is to understand what the teaching is about. And thus we get rid of a whole mess of confusion. And even if we deal with ten different teachings, there's no problem created, no difficulties.

I met a woman once. She came to hear me once, and she said "Oh your teaching is very interesting. I really like it. But I'm afraid of continuing to follow this teaching. I followed a lot of different teachings, and now I'm a bit afraid of following another one." And what's the problem here? It was that each of these teachings gave a certain type of practice. For example, she was doing at least three or four different Guruyogas. That is, for her, the Sakyapa and the Gelugpa and the Kagyudpa gurus were different. It's true. Physically, the Guru is someone out ... [tape gap] ...

If we know how to turn our gaze a little bit, we're not always looking outward towards schools and teachers and teachings, but we understand ourselves, and that all this complicated stuff is not too useful to us. If one is living within some kind of monastery or school and has got nothing else to do, then one can talk in this way, and analyze all this. But we already have a lot of things to do and a lot of confusion, and we'll make things worse for ourselves if we add a lot more confusion. We have to find something to simplify this stuff, something that will help us, really help us, in our daily lives.

For example, all the time we talk about the clock which moves ahead, which never goes back. In this way we work every day and we repeat what we have to do. If we talk about different schools and all this kind of thing, this doesn't help us. It doesn't resolve anything in our daily life. It's better to get something concrete. That's enough for now. We can relax.

practice, visualization

[next talk]

Let's talk a little bit in general about practice. Many people follow a lot of different teachings, and they learn a lot of different things. They also have an idea about a lot of different practices. But when they actually have to do something, at first they're in a state of doubt. And they really don't know how to do many things concretely. This is a very common thing.

For example someone says "I want to do a week's retreat." And when it comes time for the retreat, they come to ask me how they should do the whole thing. This means that in practice they don't know what they have to do, what they ought to do. This is true in the case of a retreat, but also we have our whole life ahead of us. Even though one knows a whole bunch of different things, one doesn't actually do anything. One is just stuck within a certain idea.

But you ought not to remain in this condition if you're really interested. It's much better to know something very precisely. It's said that it's much better to know the meaning of a single word than to know how to pronounce a hundred of them. It's true that even though we might learn many different things, in practice it doesn't work out.

Let's take the example of learning a lot about medicine, or yantra yoga. There are also various types of yogic therapy. You learn that this type of movement is good for this. This other one is good for that. You learn a whole bunch of things like this. But perhaps this person who knows all this, when they have an actual problem, they don't know what to do about it. This happens a lot.

This also happens in the case of practice. Let's say you know a lot of visualization techniques, the way they do in the monasteries. They know a lot of different words, how to pronounce them, and doing rituals. But if you go up to them and ask "Well what does all this really mean?", they don't know what to say. Among us this kind of thing shouldn't happen, because there's no result from it.

It's very important, let's say, if you do a visualization. Visualization practice is something you don't do every day. It's not easy to do every day. And when you do it, the first thing is that you know why you're doing it. And above all what you know is how it functions. And the way many people approach and learn these things, they consider them something sacred. They make a justification "Oh this master has said it." That's it.

Now the master hasn't explained this, but certainly there is a certain principle involved with following that. But for us, the most important thing is to know why we're doing it and how it functions. And if we know this then we can modify the practice. And when one doesn't understand it, then it becomes just some kind of sacred thing, some holy thing, that you can't modify. We do it because that's the way it's supposed to be.

Let's say you go to a teacher. This master says "You have to do a Guruyoga. The Guruyoga is important to maintain the transmission and to develop this transmission." And he's also explained the importance of the transmission, and why it should be maintained and developed. And you've learned how to

guruyoga, transmission

do the Guruyoga from that master. Certainly that teacher can say "Here is the Guruyoga from the Longchen Nyinthing." Or he can give one from the Kagyudpa lineage. And there's a way to do this, a way to visualize, what to recite. And one takes great pains in learning how to do this visualization and recitation. And then one is satisfied with things: "Now I know how to do Guruyoga."

But what you've forgotten is, you haven't learned what the function of Guruyoga is. You've only learned the reason that you should do it, that is, to maintain the transmission. But you haven't learned how it works, how it functions. And when you don't understand this, then you just have to follow as it's been explained to you, as it's been said.

Why is the Guruyoga important for maintaining the transmission? Because the master has made the transmission of this state of knowledge. And now he's said that this knowledge is beyond the confines of the mind. And this can't be explained in words. It can't be demonstrated visually. Thus there exists the kind of transmission that we call direct. Now the master has explained this orally and has also made it understood in a symbolic way. And the master has collaborated with you and helped you to enter into this state of knowledge. And this is what has to be developed now.

What can't be lacking is this direct transmission from the master to the disciple which we call the gongyud (dgongs-brgyud). The function of the Guruyoga is to find oneself in the presence of the union of the master and the disciple. Then through this, there begins to function this state of knowledge. From this you begin to understand how the Guruyoga functions. And from this you can understand what the most important point is that must not be lacking.

For example, when I was at the college, we had a holiday devoted to Sakya Pandita, and the whole day we did a puja of Sakya Pandita. And they called this the Gurupuja, a type of Guruyoga. So they did the puja for the whole day, and in the evening there were various discussions and instructions for the public. And I remember that every year we did this extremely long puja for the whole day with lots of offerings.

Now not only I, but the other people in the college, didn't know what the basic point was. But there was a little note right at the end of the text that said "Here you unite the state of your mind with that of the master." So we did all of these prayers for the whole day, and even when we got to this note, it was just passed over.

At that time I didn't understand this. It was only later that I understood that this was the most important point. And I went back and I looked to see if there really was a point in which it spoke about the union of the master and the disciple. And yes, there really was this footnote which says at that this moment, the unification should take place. And you know, we believed that we were scholars, that we knew what it was all about. But in this case, we didn't know what the fundamental point of the Guruyoga was.

In general, all kinds of practice go a bit at this level. And when there's a nice complicated visualization, everybody gets distracted with mastering that, and they forget what the point is. The most important point is to understand, whatever

guruyoga, kadag, lhundrub

type of practice it is, how it functions.

Now in Dzogchen we talk about a Guruyoga in the form of Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya. What this basically means is that we can do it with a lot of words, with few words, or in a moment. Because we understand that it's the union of master and disciple. Why can we do this? Because we know how the Guruyoga functions.

The same is true for the visualization of a divinity. We know the principle, why one must do a visualization. First of all, it's a transformation. And we know through this transformation how the practice works. This kind of thing is explained for example in Anuyoga. This is the case when we do the visualization of Sihamukha and so forth. This is a very simplified, reduced, form of doing a visualization.

Now why can we do it in this simplified form? Because we know how a visualization will work. The principle of a visualization is to manifest what is. It's not a way of constructing something. For example, in the Anuyoga, we find the Tibetan term lhundrub (lhun-grub). This is also a characteristic term of Dzogchen. It's a well-known term also in the Anuyoga. And lhundrub means the self-perfectedness of all of one's qualities, characteristics.

When Dzogchen is explained, there are two principles. One is called kadag. The other is called lhundrub. Kadag means "pure since the very beginning". This is the same as the concept in the Sutras as shunyata, or void. And if something is void from the very beginning, then necessarily it must also be pure. But in Dzogchen there's not only this conception of the kadag, the purity, there's also the lhundrub, more important. Kadag means how it is, what its condition is. Lhundrub means how its qualities manifest themselves.

Now when we're dealing with a manifestation of the Sambhogakaya, this is not something that we're creating. It's not like "Well we don't have it now. Then we do something. Then it comes about anew." But simply it's the manifestation, the appearing, of that which is. And this is what we mean by lhundrub. For example, we have the sun in the sky. When there's bad weather we don't see the sun. But the sun is always the same, is always there.

And it's true, when we take a flight in an airplane, it seems like it's always a beautiful day. And when get to the country we're going to, and we go down, then it's bad weather. And lhundrub means how the sun manifests, as it is. And when we talk about it not manifesting, that means that there are obstacles, just like there are clouds which cover the sun.

And in Tantrism there is also this concept. Now you have to understand that there's a little bit of difference in the way of seeing between the Anuyoga and the Anuttara tantras in general. For those who don't know this term, Anuttara tantra means the higher Tantras, the superior Tantras. In the Anuttara tantras they talk about the seed syllable at the level of cause.

Let's give an example. Let's say we're manifesting ourselves as Sihamukha, that is, a wrathful dakini. And in this case there's a letter, a syllable, HUM. So we start off by visualizing this letter at the center of our body. And

visualization, union

what this really means is that this HUM represents the state of our consciousness. And in general in the Anuttara tantra this is called the letter, or the word, of the cause.

So from this cause there is a manifestation. Then slowly slowly it manifests and matures. When this is fully matured, then we call that "realizing the kyerim (bskyed-rim)". That is, in this case, a gradual visualization is necessary. One has to train oneself slowly in this visualization until it becomes something concrete. And thus we visualize each part of the visualization, one by one. And we do each part in what it consists, all the way to the level of the ornaments that the deity wears. In Tibetan we talk about kyerim tanpatog (brtan-pa rtogs ??). Kyerim means the stage of developing the visualization. And tanpatog, until it becomes stabilized. For a practitioner, slowly slowly this becomes something real.

This means that this transformation process, this visualization, has become realized ... [tape gap] ... And then through this experience we can discover what its real state is.

Speaking more generally or grossly, we talk about saltong (gsal-stong) and nangtong (snang-stong) and detong (bde-stong). And these are all methods for entering into and knowing what this primordial state is. And so always in Tantrism this kind of union is always explained. But in Dzogchen teaching, they might use some of the words, detong, lhagtong (lhag-mthong), but the source of these in Dzogchen comes from Anuyoga.

But in the true Dzogchen, that which is called Atiyoga, there isn't this concept of union. But more likely they'll talk about nyimay (gnyis-med). This means non-duality. So non-duality and union are a bit different. When we talk about finding ourselves in the state of rigpa, we're not talking about the union of the state of lhundrub and kadag. When we talk about lhundrub this means the state as it is, its true condition. That state itself manifests itself.

So no matter what type of practice we do, if we understand this, we know how the practice functions. And things become much simpler. And things don't become so remote and untouchable. As I said, people usually think that things that have to do with the teaching are something holy. And in this case something that's very small, not important at all, becomes something very important.

Let's say we do some kind of ritual like a Ganapuja. And they say "Well this thing has to be placed here, and this here, and this one's got to be up on top, and this one on the bottom." And it takes them hours to prepare for this, and they go about with a book, and they check off each thing that has to be done. This becomes more important than the teaching itself.

Why do these things happen? This means that one doesn't go towards what the real meaning is. So we have to try to go a bit toward what the sense, the meaning, is. So we have to know what the principle of the practice is, and how to use it.

First of all a practitioner of Dzogchen must be active. That is, human beings do the practice. The practice doesn't regulate the human being. That is, if I'm going to do the

ideal practitioner

practice, I have the capacity to modify it as I wish. Let's say I have at my disposal one hour for practice today. And so I know how to do something in that time. Let's say at that time I find myself outside, not in the house, so I know what to do in that case. And this is what we mean by a practitioner who's active and knows what to do. So we call this an ideal practitioner. This practitioner knows what is useful for him or her.

The Tibetans have a proverb: They say "the length of five fingers". If a person extends this finger, I have to respond with the other. If he extends another finger, I have to do the same. This means one knows how to respond according to what's necessary.

Let's say you go out to eat in a restaurant, and one feels that one is a practitioner. Usually when practitioners eat they're not indifferent about it. They do something like the Ganapuja. Let's say you go to a restaurant for a fantastic meal, and you think "I ought to do a really good Ganapuja for this. And I'm going to do this in order to place a cause in the beings that the food has been made out of, and also to accumulate good action for myself."

Now that idea is not wrong. That idea is perfect. But in this case I have to be what we've called an ideal practitioner. Otherwise it's not going to work. Now the practitioner knows how to do a Ganapuja that's linked with all of the words and all the mantras. Let's say you launch into this complicated Ganapuja in the middle of the restaurant. Everybody is not going to think too well of you. Even if the other people are in favor of this kind of practice, they might think you're a bit of a fanatic. One is not ideal in this situation.

"Ideal" means that you know what to do when it is necessary. It's not that it's established what you have to do, like putting a patch on your clothes. When we have a hole in our clothes we put something over it. This means the ideal person. Because the wind is not going to get in. You won't catch a cold. And if it's a bigger hole, then you're going to have to put a bigger patch. And if there's no hole then you ought not to put a patch.

So there are many things to practice, without any limit. So if you know what to do and how to do it, that's an ideal practitioner. But if you've learned in the way of "I've learned this and how I have to do it", this means that the method of practice has conditioned the individual, and that person doesn't know how to work with the teaching.

Let's say I go to a clothing store. I come across some pants, American style, which are usually either extremely long or extremely wide, and I think this is good quality stuff, good quality clothing. But if I buy this, and it doesn't fit me, and I put it on, it's ridiculous. This means that you haven't gone about buying clothes in the ideal way. That is, the clothes have to fit me, and not just look nice in the store.

In regard to the teaching, we have to know what is necessary, and be ready to apply the teaching. And what we really have to know is what are the most important things, what are the most indispensable things. And thus we become an

ideal practitioner, sleeping practice
 ideal practitioner. Thus, what we know will eventually become something concrete. You always have to remember that we have our body, voice and mind, and there is no practice which is outside of these. And these three aspects of our existence are in contact with various circumstances. And when we understand this, then practice becomes something simple.

In Dzogchen there are practices like the wheel of sleeping contemplation. This means that one can sleep peacefully without doing anything. Among us there was a yogi, a famous practitioner of Dzogchen. Two of my uncles went to see this master. Both of them told me that he lived and slept within a cave. He was alone. And what he had to sleep on were some animal skins. When people came to offer him some food, he would eat. But the only thing that he did was sleep. Whenever you might come by, he'd be lying down sleeping.

If one doesn't understand what this practice was about, it seems ridiculous. However since the principal aspect of our existence is the mind, and then the voice, and then the body, body means "in the material", so all kinds of things like preparing a mandala, and making offerings, this is all at the level of body. At the level of voice we have reciting a mantra. But we also have mind. When we find ourselves in the condition, that is, the state of the nature of the mind, then certainly in that case the more important practice is that. Therefore practice is always linked with these three.

And so I've never said that one has to practice solely with that aspect of body. I also haven't said that we have to just make prayers and recite mantras. And therefore there are many ways to practice. And when a practitioner is ideal, he knows how to use all of these. So there are masters who only sleep. And also while sleeping day and night, they can realize themselves. It doesn't mean one can imitate the sleeping practice.

What we're talking about is the fact that we find ourselves in many circumstances. What we're saying is one has to be ideal in regard to this. Let's say we're in a house like this where no one's bothering us. And everybody here is a practitioner. We can manifest all three, body, voice, and mind. We can do whatever practices arise through body for example. We can do prostrations, yantra yoga. But if a place isn't adapted to doing this kind of thing, then to do prostrations there is not good. So when it's adapted for that, then one can fully make use of body, voice, and mind.

But one shouldn't be regulated in one's way of practicing. But the ideal practitioner is one who knows how to regulate or govern oneself. Let's say a practitioner is one who knows how to regulate or govern oneself. Let's say a practitioner has learned how to do some kind of shinay (zhi-gnas). And you've understood that shinay is very important because it's a practice of the mind.

Let's say you've learned a shinay as taught by the Sakyapas. And there has to be a something specific that one focusses on. And they've established at what level it should be placed, high or low. And the height is going to regulate the person, whether they're nervous or sleepy, depends on where you put it. And they also talk about how the body should be controlled, the way you sit.

ideal practitioner

Then if you learn all this and you do this kind of practice, this means that the practice is regulating the person. Now, when there's a chance to do this, one can utilize it very well. But when you don't have a chance to do this, let's say one day you find yourself in an open place, a beautiful garden. And you think "Oh, too bad, what a beautiful day. What a beautiful place. It's full of trees, fresh air.

How could I do shinay? Because the object that I'm supposed to fix on isn't here." And let's say that I bring with me and I prepare this object. But if there's a bunch of people walking around, it doesn't work. Here's a case where you've been regulated, conditioned, by the practice. And these things have become an impediment, an interruption, for the continuing of practice.

Now let's say we have an ideal practitioner. Then that person can find any number of places to fix. That's because he doesn't give a lot of importance to what specifically is being fixed on. It doesn't have to be a statue of Buddha or Manjushri. And it doesn't have to be a flower or some specific drawing. But you know that fixation is just to regulate your attention. When you know this, you can apply this practice anywhere, even when you're walking or in a bus.

Because the mind is not like the body. It doesn't manifest itself outwardly. And if I'm sitting in a corner of the bus very calmly, who can judge what it is I'm up to. I can do for as long as I want the fixation. So this is an example of being active and ideal.

So for me it's not really important that one knows a whole bunch of practices. What's important is to know what the principle is. When one knows the principle, then one can do many many different types of practices, but all carrying oneself in a certain way. That is, these methods are like keys.

Now people meet many masters and they get many initiations. One person goes to a Nyingma master, and they say "Oh I received the Vajrakilaya initiation." But if I asked him how exactly he practices Vajrakilaya, he wouldn't have much to say. And let's say you've gone to a Gelugpa master and you've received the initiation of the Guhyasamaja. In the same way you got the Khorlo Dehog (khor-lo bde-mchog ??) and the Hevajra. You've received all this, but you don't really know how to practice them. This is an example of why someone has not understood the real meaning of practice. They've put all these practices in front of them like objects.

For example, when I was small I received the Kalachakra initiation. And up to the point where I received this, I had all kinds of ideas about doing the practice of Kalachakra. Now after I received this initiation, I read about how to do the kyerim, that is, the visualization, and I saw how complicated and difficult it was. I read it over two or three times, but I really didn't understand anything. And then even that wish that I had ...

Why did that happen? Because I was regarding it as some object out there that I was looking at. For example, when they describe the body of Kalachakra, they say one side is one color and the other side has a different color. Then they

Kalachakra, Anuyoga

talk about the arms having different colors too. Finally they get down to the fingers and they also have different colors. Then each joint of the fingers has a different color. At that time I didn't understand what that meant, what was the point.

Let's take the example of why they talk about the color of the left and the right side. They're not talking there about the different colors of the arms when they talk about the different colors of the left and right hands. But when they're also talking about the fingers then what's the colors of the hands? I got really confused. This is because I was looking at it all objectively, not only Kalachakra, but all practices.

It's much better to go to what the real sense is, especially in the case of Anuyoga, where we know it's a manifestation of that which is, as it is. In this case it's enough to know what the fundamental seed syllable is, and that to make this function there's the mantra. Because the mantra represents that aspect of the voice, energy. And the mantra has the function of integrating that manifestation and its function. So then, with that word, there's a manifestation. It functions with the mantra. Things are simple.

Let's say now I get the idea of doing some practice of Kalachakra. I don't go into all these verbal ideas about kyerim, dzogrim (rdzogs-rim), all this complicated stuff. What I do is I visualize the principal letter. And I can use a HUM, because the HUM is a symbol of the state of the mind of everyone, and through this in a moment manifest oneself as Kalachakra. And it was this kind of teaching of transformation that was transmitted by my master. And to find myself in the state of Kalachakra was to find myself in the primordial state.

And this is what is referred to in Dzogchen as the kadag ??, the four dimensions. And then the manifestation in a moment of Kalachakra is the lhundrub, that is, the manifestation of self-perfectedness, just like the sun manifests in the sky when there's a calm sky without clouds. So in a moment the whole sky can be present. It's not like I'm going to specify this particular place, this particular, that particular. Then together with this, I have the transmission of the sound of the mantra. And then I use this mantra in order to realize, to integrate, this practice of Kalachakra. So here you also have the capacity to practice Kalachakra also. And so, this is the famous mantra of Kalachakra, which is written vertically.

So here's the case of the ideal practitioner. Let's say you've gone to the Dalai Lama and received the initiation of Kalachakra. And let's say one day you get a little bit of desire to do this practice. Certainly you can do it and utilize it like others do. But let's say you don't have the transmission of the mantra. You don't have the symbolic transmission of Tantrism. In this case then, there's less advantage to doing a practice.

So the ideal practitioner, whenever there's the chance, can make use of these transmissions that one has received. So in this case things aren't so complicated. It's actually something quite simple. So really in all things we ought not to create complications for ourselves. Whenever there are

practice of the day and night

complications, you have to free yourselves from them by collaborating with yourself. This is one of the most important points of the teaching. It really is. The teaching is not to make things more complicated, but more simple.

Some practitioners were originally very open and very simple people, but then when they became real practitioners, they became more closed and more complicated. What this really means is that they are not very ideal in their practice. So it's very important to discover these things and proceed simply. This is the talk. So we can take a break.

[morning talk]

Today I'm going to explain a little bit this text. It's a text that I wrote in these last few days. It's about a simple way of doing practice. Now there is, in the Dzogchen Longde, a text taught by Garab Dorje on how to practice both day and night. What I've done here is make a kind of summary of this. That's the idea.

The first words, gdod ma'i rnal 'byor, means yoga, that is, the knowledge of the primordial state. Lam khyer means how to apply this, how to put this knowledge into practice. Nyin mtshan means day and night. And 'khor lo ma means to continue, like a wheel. So let's say we're doing the practice of the night. But then the morning comes. Then we do practice of the day, and certainly night comes. Then we do practice of the night again, and then there's day.

And so when we do practice, what we have to do is continue in this way. It's not a retreat type of practice. When you do a retreat, you say "Okay, I'm going to start on Monday. And I'm going to finish on Sunday." It doesn't continue on like a wheel. When we talk about integrating practice into daily life, what we have to know a bit is how life continues, very concretely. So it's very important that one practice just like a wheel turns.

When you write a text in the proper way, you begin with a salutation to the masters. The first line is just that, bla ma dam pa rnam la phyag 'tshal lo. Very importantly, when we have a teaching, it's always linked to a transmission. And when I make some kind of explanation or teaching of Dzogchen, it means it's linked to my masters. In this case I'm very aware of that. Thus with this mind, I kind of pay my respects.

So starting from the beginning, rigs kun means all of the families, basically the five families. And khyab bdag means with the presence of all. That is, I have various types of teaching coming from the various families, but I don't leave them separate. I unify them in their one unique source. And one recognizes that that source is the master. So the next words are Changchub Dorje, my master. Here I name the Dzogchen master. Perhaps I have other kinds of masters, but here because I'm giving the essence of Dzogchen I use this master's name.

And then it says o rgyan bstan 'dzin. This was another master of mine who was also my uncle, an important teacher for me. This was the first master of Dzogchen that I had contact with. And then there's rdo rje dpal sgron. This is the master that I talked about the other time whose name is Ayu

masters, permission of dakinis, 4 awarenesses
 Khandro also, from whom I received many teachings, above all that of the Dzogchen Yangthig. And sogs means etcetera, because there are a lot of other teachers of Dzogchen. It's not that I have to give a list of all of them. These masters are like a symbol, when I have these present.

The next line, then, means to all the masters of the Dzogchen lineage. Then the last line means, I pay my respects with body, voice and mind. Now this paying respects is not the usual way we do it, but with a real recognition of the significance. So this next line has kun bzang, kun tu bzang po, dpal ldan rdo rje sems dpa', Vajrasattva. And this is Dharmakaya and Sambhogakaya.

And these made the transmission to the first human master, Garab Dorje. What did they transmit? They transmitted the essence of Atiyoga, that is, the primordial yoga. And what they taught was how to bring this practice into daily life. In the last line, I want to explain a little bit about the essence of this teaching.

Spro la means for this explanation that I'm making. And I'm asking the permission of the dakinis to do this. One asks the permission because they are the owners of the teaching. When we don't behave well in regard to the teaching, there can be a kind of punishment through the dakinis. Because they are the principal guardians of the teaching. And thus we say they are like the owners of the teaching.

Thus in the beginning when Garab Dorje taught, for many years who was he teaching to? The dakinis. The teaching was compiled in terms of all the Tantras and the writings by the dakinis. And therefore the dakinis are very important. So when we have the representations of the guardians, the very first is Ekajati, a dakini. Therefore I've asked permission.

Now the next verse. The first words, rtag tu, in general, always, one must have trained in the four awarenesses. That is, in whatever practice one does, one has to be aware. That is, if one knows how to do a practice, but because of distraction or laziness, one doesn't do it, why does this happen? Because one is not aware. To be aware means not to waste one's time. And to be aware one ought to know the preciousness of the teaching, and to know what our unique occasion is, that we have the possibility to practice. And we know that if we lose this occasion, what the consequences are. All of this is what we call being aware.

Now usually when we talk about these four, we talk about the importance of human birth. When you learn the ngondro, for example, you learn the eighteen characteristics of this human birth. You learn one by one. But it's not just that one is born a human being. It's also impermanent. That is, time passes and the end comes. They give the example of a merchant who went to an island of jewels, but came back empty handed. This kind of thing happens because one is not aware. Even though one has this precious human birth, when one returns, that is, when one enters the state of the bardo, one's in the same state as a dog for example.

And this means one has to also be aware of impermanence. And they make an analysis of impermanence, looking externally to the seasons and the world, and also to the individual. But the important thing is not to know how to make a lot of

four awarenesses, human birth

analyses. The important thing is simply to have the presence of this awareness. Now even if one is aware of this impermanence, if one hasn't done anything concretely, then the famous problem of karma hasn't been resolved. And for example, that which accumulates negative causes has its consequence, which is a negative result. And so you have to be aware of this karma. The consequence results in transmigration and suffering.

So when you are aware of these things, then you can be more active in regard to them. Therefore, you have to have trained yourself in these four awarenesses. So in whatever moment, whatever circumstance, try to be present and aware. Rgyud sbyang means this, to train one's own condition. This doesn't mean just to study and analyze. This is something very important. There are people who learn and then do the ngondro for a long time.

For example, when they study these four awarenesses, they ask "Well what are the conditions of human beings? So there are these ten so-called perfections, five internal, five external. And then there are eight things which must be lacking." And they all do this kind of analysis. "How did this master analyze it? How did that one do it?" Finally when they get to practice, they're told to concentrate on these arguments. The first ten things for ten days, the second eight for eight days.

I'll give a simple example. For example, what are the characteristics of oneself? I'm born a human being. I'm born in a central country where there is the teaching. I'm complete in all my senses. This is an example of the kind of arguments they use. So all day you think "Aha, I'm born a human being." This you concentrate on for a day. And then the next day you think "I'm born in a central place, not off in some corner of the globe in Africa somewhere." The whole day you're thinking that.

And then you think "Ah, I have my eyes. I have my ears. All my senses are functioning." You can practice like this for eighteen days. It's true. Many people do it this way, and this is the way to practice. This is the way the practice is intended. That is, you have to concentrate on each phase of the argument and train yourself in that.

But in the Dzogchen teaching these don't function in this way. You don't have to establish an argument, and create it and stabilize something. Because arguments, statements, are made by human beings. After the Buddha taught about the preciousness of human birth, then this kind of talk arose.

Let's take the example of Buddha talking about impermanence. He gave the example first of clouds in the autumn sky, or how a mountain stream falls. Or, it's like a drama, or just like a flickering of a candle light. Now when we follow these kinds of examples the Buddha has given, then we go into analysis and then we say "Aha, there were this many..." And then this becomes a whole type of argument. The Buddha didn't go about an argument based on so many examples. What he did was, he tried to make people understand something using various methods. But if we're going to go and start analyzing his words, then we can get into hundreds and thousands of arguments.

human birth, transmission

So the principal thing is not to concentrate on these various arguments. What's more important is to have present what they're talking about. Now let's say we're talking about the importance of human birth. It's not important to ask whether it enters within these eighteen categories or not. What you have to know is that a human birth is better than that of a cat or a dog. A human being knows how to think. He understands what's been said. And a human being has a great capacity to do evil, like making atom bombs.

But human beings also have the capacity for realization in his life. And thus human beings have a superior capacity compared to animals. This is the true importance of human birth. So being aware that this is how it is, this is what we mean by awareness, mindfulness.

Now above all for westerners, if we have to go and study these analyses, it becomes very complicated. Not only for us, it's also complicated for Tibetans. And in this way the real sense is lost. I'm not saying that there are only these four types of awareness. But awareness means to not be distracted and try to do one's best in regard to everything. Thus you train yourself in being present.

And then teachings like Dzogchen and Tantrism are linked through transmission. A transmission means a way to make the state of the individual understood, whether it be through words orally, through symbol, or through engaging in practice together. The one who transmits is called the master.

Let's take the example of the mirror. The mirror is like the state of our consciousness. It reflects everything, good and bad. What we don't understand is that all the reflections arise as characteristics or qualities of the mirror itself. Because the capacity, or the nature, of the mirror is not something that is seen. It doesn't enter into the measure and the capacity of our senses. What enters into our capacity are the reflections.

What we don't understand is how to know the nature of the mirror from the reflections. What we are ignorant of is the capacity, the real condition, of the mirror. What we do is we follow and get conditioned by the reflections in the mirror, and we take them as solid reality. From this comes that which we call transmigration and all its problems.

Now the master makes the individual understand that this nature of the mind is the source of all relative things. That is, one shouldn't look behind all these reflections, but to where they come from. When you begin to understand this thing, then we talk about transmission of the state of knowledge. However in this state, this knowledge, it's still an idea of this knowledge. That is, one hasn't realized it. To realize it you have to put it into practice and develop this knowledge.

And in this case, a lot depends on the transmission, because it's from the transmission that one has entered into the knowledge. Therefore practices like Guruyoga are very important. So the master has transmitted the real state of the individual. Then one practices this in order to realize it, to make it real. So what one is doing here is the Guruyoga.

Now the word here is rnal 'byor. The Sanskrit is yoga.

yoga, 4 moments

But in Dzogchen the meaning is a bit deeper than what is usually called yoga. There are many different interpretations of yoga. Some say yoga means union. But here yoga does not mean union. Rnal means the natural condition which hasn't been changed or altered in any way. In Tibetan rnal ma means the condition as it is, which hasn't been touched, hasn't been altered. And 'byor means one possesses this knowledge. So rnal 'byor is very similar to what we call the state of rigpa. So finding oneself in the presence of this knowledge is what we call rigpa. Being ignorant of this state, as if it didn't exist, is what we call marigpa, or ignorance.

The next line. Then one shouldn't be separate from this knowledge any time, in any moment. In the Dzogchen teaching, the principal thing that we must do is not be distracted. To not be distracted means to have presence. So if one has the presence of this state of rigpa, this is what presence means. This is the fundamental practice of Dzogchen. The next words, dus bzhir, means for the four moments of time. This word also sometimes means the fourth time. Here it means in the four moments, in the four times.

What are the four moments in our daily life? ... [tape gap] ... So there's the time of eating, the time of walking, the time of sleeping, the time of sitting around. These are the four moments or activities that govern our whole life. Let's say I'm going to go to work, working in the office. What am I doing there? I'm walking or sitting. It's certain that one is doing one of those two. Or one is eating. One person says "No I'm not doing that. I'm going to go swimming." Swimming is a kind of walking, moving. And sitting is sitting. So everything is comprised in these four activities. Therefore it says "in these four times, one is not distracted," that one is always present.

Dran-shes means to have the presence of this awareness. Usually dran-pa means memory. But the compound dran-shes means mindfulness, awareness. Above all this term shes, shes-pa, means presence. The next word, skyong ba, means to continue this. rnal- 'byor rtsa-ba yin means this is the root of practice.

Let's say someone says "Oh, every day I do a hundred prostrations. There's nothing strange or marvelous about doing these prostrations in a distracted manner. In this case what would be better would be to try to have some presence of mind for a half hour. So what's more important is with whatever action one does with body, voice or mind, to try to be present and non-distracted. Then being able to govern oneself in whatever action one does, with this presence, then you've got something really important. So you have to look well.

Nowadays, when people do ngondro for example, there's a lot of prostration and mantra recitation. And they give a lot of importance to this. But what's the source of prostrations? Prostrations are a gesture of respect. Now why is this a virtuous action? Because there's a positive intent.

There are some feudal countries in which when you approach a person of power, a leader, you must prostrate. Even today, if you go to a small place like Bhutan, when the people come before the king, they do a prostration just like

prostrations, circumambulation, intention they do before the Buddha. Why do they do it? It's not that they're recognizing that the king is an awakened being. They do it because if they don't do it, the king will be offended. They have to show that the king is somebody important. So to do ten prostrations in front of the king, what positive action is that? It has no virtuous result, even if one does it perfectly. Because there's not the intention that this is going to be a virtuous action.

So what's important here is not the gesture and doing it, but the intention. So if we forget the intention, then there's a lot of things that we'll do that won't have a virtuous result. And we won't even find any kind of explanation.

For example, Tibetans are always making a circumambulation of temples. When Tibetans want to show off how faithful they are, in the left hand they take up their mala, in the right the prayer wheel, and they go and walk around the temple. They do it double, turning once with their feet and once with the hand, turning the wheel. And if you ask them what they're doing then they say "I'm performing a virtuous action." Another person says "Well I'm practicing religion."

But if you ask them "Why is it virtuous? Why is this religious?" They don't know what to say. But they have a good intention, and therefore it is a virtuous action. But the source of this is that they've been introduced to this method for producing good action.

The circumambulation is a gesture of respect. There's no other way to explain it. In the Buddhist texts they say that after the Buddha taught, the students were very satisfied. They got up and they did some prostrations, and they circumambulated him. And they turned with their right side toward him. This was the gesture of respect. And to continue in this way with the right side toward him was a way of showing more and more respect. So all of these kinds of practices were introduced with the point that they're based on good intention.

So the basis of this is our intention, that is, the mind. And therefore the master Jigmay Lingpa ('jigs-med gling-pa) said "If the intention is good, life and the final result are good. And if it's the opposite, the result is the opposite." Therefore you have to learn how to have good intention. This is a very important teaching. And this kind of teaching makes you understand from where virtue arises. So it doesn't depend on some kind of costume or culture. What you have to know is how to produce virtue with your positive intention, in every moment, in all circumstances.

There's an example given in the ngondro of the Longchen Nyingthig (klong-chen snying-thig). It was said that one person, I don't remember, a few, had the seed of realization planted by virtue of a tsa tsa, one of these little clay stupa-like things. So a person made one of these tsa tsa out of some earth. He said "I did something good. I made this representation of a chorten (mchod-rten). That accumulates good action." There was a good intention. He didn't have the intention to harm someone else. Then the next person took it, put it on top of a rock by a road. And he thought "Where it

good intention, practice of the day, understanding was before shows no respect. I want to respect a little more. I'll put it up here." So that person also had a good intention.

Then another person thought "This tsa tsa is on a rock. It's out in the rain. And in the rain it's going to be ruined, dissolved. You need some kind of cover for it." But around there he couldn't find anything. All there was was an old shoe. He placed it on top of the tsa tsa. This was also a good action because there was a good intention.

Now there were four people involved because someone else came along. And the person say there was a shoe on top of a tsa tsa and thought "Stupid. What a lack of respect." And he quickly took that shoe and threw it away. Now this also was a good intention. And it was said that that person also accumulated good action. So there's no external rule for judging good actions. It comes from the inside. Thus one has to try at any moment in any circumstance to do one's best.

In general in daily life, that which is always going round and round is daily life, is day and night. So day and night is what we call zhag phrugs gcig. Certainly a principal practice in regard to this will have two types, the practice of day, and of night.

Now that which dominates the three times. So here we're not talking about the three times of past, present, future, but three of those four times we mentioned before. That is, sleep doesn't come into it. And this is the practice of the day. So the practice of the day has three principal aspects. There are these three. The first is rtogs, to understand, to comprehend. The second, brtan, to stabilize. And bogs dbyung, to progress in this. These are the three aspects.

Now the first, to understand that which one hasn't understood. This understanding is not something just mental that one does through reasoning. The kind of understanding is that famous transmitted understanding that we talked about before. That's called rtogs-pa in Tibetan. There are the words lta-ba and rtogs-pa. Lta-ba is the way of seeing. The lta-ba can be justified and analyzed with the mind. But lta-ba rtogs-pa means to really enter into knowledge of that lta ba. Tawa can be analysis, an explanation.

Let's take something mysterious. Let's say there's something that nobody knows what it is except for one person who makes an explanation of it. And we follow this argument and this explanation. At a certain point we get an idea of it. This idea that we get when it's very clear, we call that the tawa. That is, I form my idea through reading, and through the information that person has supplied. I can continue to deepen this kind of knowledge reading various interpretations. And I can change this every day, because I can always find a better explanation. Now why can this always change? Because I have no concrete knowledge. I'm depending on the words and the interpretation of the other.

But rtogs-pa means I've finally entered into a direct knowledge. That is, I've had direct contact with this mysterious stuff. I've touched it and I know what it is. Then when I read all the explanations of others, I can understand how they came to that. And if there's an error, I can see that it's so. So rtogs-pa and tawa are two different

things.

If one hasn't entered into this knowledge, in order to do so, what do I have to do? All things that we see in front of our eyes. Now snang means not just what's before our eyes, but anything that might appear before the mind. Grags-pa means what we hear with our ears. But grags-pa can also mean something that's explained to us, that we hear. So all of these existences, even though they manifest themselves in different ways, and we see them in different ways, they don't exist in a real sense. They're like reflections, like in the example of the mirror.

In the mirror, beautiful and ugly things can be reflected, whatever, but they're not reality. Now we can understand that reflections in a mirror are not concrete things. But a kitten just born, walks up to a mirror, doesn't understand that that reflection is not real, and that kitten goes up to the mirror to play with the reflection of the cat in the mirror. We understand the nature of the reflection in a mirror. But the really big reflection we don't understand. Bzhin the last word there, means how it is, how these reflections are.

Sems kyi 'phrul nyid means a miracle of the mind. Miracle here means like in a mirror, the way in which beautiful and ugly things, reflections, appear. In Dzogchen all the manifestations of the mind are understood as tsal (rtsal), that is, the energy of Bodhicitta, the primordial state. And they also use a term like created-by-the-mind. Now when we talk about created-by-the-mind, don't mix this up with the Sutric teaching. What it means is that these are like qualifications, qualities of that state, that is, the reflections are. Kho thag chod means to have no doubt about it.

Now when one has entered into the knowledge of this famous illusoriness of things, the next verse, about sems and sems-nyid. Sems is a relative thing. Sems-nyid is the nature of the mind. The nature of the mind is like the clarity and limpidity of the mirror. This from the very beginning is void. That is, it's not a concrete thing. This is also what is called bdag med pa. It has no I-ness to it. This is a famous concept in the Buddhist Sutras. They talk a lot about this non-ego. This non-ego is the principle of the void from the very beginning. This is the real condition of the mind.

But this doesn't mean there's just nothing. Even if it is void, it's present. It is clarity without interruption, like the reflection of the moon in water. That is, in various ways, in various circumstances, everything appears. First of all we take a look at our thoughts. Because thought is that which arises from the mind. Because the thoughts are a way in which the nature of the mind manifests itself. Because if we want to understand something about the nature of the mirror itself, we have to go through an understanding of the reflections.

So when there is this reflection, ..., so we analyze thoughts into where they come from, where they are now, and where they're going. And nothing can be confirmed or affirmed about. One finds that there is void. This is what stong-pa, the void, means. This is a real characteristic of the nature

of the mind.

But even if this is the case, thoughts always arise. If I analyze a certain thought, that there's nothing to it, another thought arises. Then I look at that second thought, nothing to it. Then there's the third one. Thus thoughts continually arise. And this is the word 'gags-med, without interruption. But there's no rule to this 'gags-med, to this without interruption. Appearances can come about in many ways. And this is what is meant by the reflection of the moon in water.

So all of these thoughts and apparitions arise, but always if one looks at it, they're void. So that apparitionalness itself is void. That voidness itself is the appearing. Therefore it says gsal-stong gnyis-med, the non-duality of clarity and empty. It's not that sometimes you find clarity and other times void. One finds this non-duality of void and clarity in the moment of presence.

But where is this non-duality when one finds oneself at the level of mind? Because mind is limited in time. At the level of mind one can't be two. If it's the present, it's not the future. So when it's the future, then that previous present is now past. So a lot of things just don't enter into the limits of the mind.

We have that famous example of the yak's horn with Milarepa. It's said that Milarepa was inside this yak's horn, singing his song, but that he didn't become smaller. But the yak's horn didn't become bigger either. Something like this is a contradiction for our brains. Why is there a contradiction? Because it contradicts the logic of the mind. Because we're always measuring, judging, with the mind.

But the state of rigpa is beyond this measuring. In the state of rigpa, of presence, there is the non-duality of clarity and emptiness. This non-dual presence of clarity and void is the supreme wisdom. This is also lhundrub, self-perfectedness. Remember yesterday we talked about the two principles kadag and lhundrub. The kadag and lhundrub are the qualifications of the primordial state which are called sku and ye-shes, wisdom and its dimension. This presence or the state of rigpa, its dimension, is the naturally present. You have to understand this.

Next verse: understanding that all vision is like an ornament to the real nature of existence. When one understands this, it self-liberates them through relaxing into this state of presence, that is, the appearance of all the senses and their contacts. For example, the first most important is vision, sight. Whether I see something beautiful or ugly, if I don't go into judging that it's beautiful or ugly, it's always like an ornament to the state.

But when this beauty or ugliness is communicated to the mind and one enters into judgment, one begins to feel pleasure. This is what we call a passion. But the presence of that appearance, before there's the judgment, we call that clarity.

So all these appearances, whether beautiful or ugly, are like ornaments. But even if there are the activities of the mind which come after, these are self-liberating. That is, tshogs-drug, sight and hearing, all of these six,

passions, self-liberation

self-liberate themselves on contact. Now we talked about that which can be seen like the external world.

Now we're looking to the inside, the state of rigpa, of awareness, that its manifestation is wisdom. It's like the rising of the sun which is not lacking in its light rays. That is, the arising of this rigpa never lacks the lhundrub, that is, its essential qualifications. With this presence, that is, understanding in this way, one liberates all of these passion-based appearances.

Before we were talking about the tshogs-drug, the six senses. Now we're talking about the passions, whether they be greed, hatred, delusion. The passions become powerful when we're ignorant of the state of rigpa, and we begin to follow them.

But to find oneself in the very state of these passions, they don't become a means to condition us. But it's not the case that one has to abandon the passions or try to get away from them. But the passions once again become like an ornament or a quality. And when the passions become like an ornament, this is called wisdom. And this is what is meant by self-liberation.

snang-rig means the appearances and the presence of them. They don't remain as two. They're integrated into one state. When one finds oneself in this type of awareness, one then self-liberates all dualistic concepts and thoughts. Even if I have a lot of dualistic thoughts, I don't try to run away from these, abandon them, or block them. But I find myself in the very state of these dualistic thoughts. This is also a method of self-liberation.

Also there are, in the next lines, methods of self-liberation. And these are applied according to the capacity of the practitioner. There are these three levels: gcer-grol, shar-grol, rang-grol. Now you have to remember that Dzogchen is this famous path of self-liberation. When one doesn't have the capacity to directly have that self-liberation, there's also gcer-grol and shar-grol.

Gcer means to observe this itself. That is, it's not yet real self-liberation. When one is observing oneself, there's still some kind of force or effort applied. When one has this effort applied, then one is making an effort, and one can't call that self-liberation. The person doesn't have the capacity of spontaneous self-liberation. In this case one recognizes one doesn't have that capacity, and one does the gcer-grol. Let's say a thought arises. When it arises I look it straight in the face, and it self-liberates. This is gcer-grol.

Then there's shar-grol. Shar means to arise. In its arising, in that moment, it self-liberates... [tape gap] ... Now in this case I don't have to look it straight in the face. But just as it arises, I find myself in the state of presence, and thus the thought is self-liberated. That is, the shar-grol also is not the full, the sufficient, self-liberation, the rang-byung.

Now when the capacity is fully perfected, we talk about rang-grol. Rang-grol is the real self-liberation. That is, one has gone beyond making efforts. One has gone beyond the doing of attention. Arising, self-liberated. Arising,

self-liberation, state of rigpa
 self-liberated. When one gets to this level, one has arrived at the continuity of the state of rigpa. One doesn't have the problem of being conditioned by the tshogs-drug, the contact with the external senses, and on the other hand with the internal thoughts. This is the method of self-liberation.

Now we haven't talked about practicing in terms of how you sit, how you should breathe, and this kind of thing. We've only said the practice of the day, that the day is dominated by these three kinds of movements, of walking, eating, sitting. In these three moments there are always thoughts going on. There's always contact with the senses, outside. So we talked about how to practice and train oneself in this. Even if you don't have the capacity for complete self-liberation, you do the shar-grol, the arising and the self-liberation, or the gcer-grol, the effort of observing.

The next phrase is really important, we'll do that and then we'll stop. It's very important. This is really the essence. thol-byung means suddenly. Skad-cig means a moment. And dang-po means the first moment. Shes-pa means the presence of this knowledge. So the presence of this awareness in the first moment as it arises suddenly.

Ma-bcos means not to correct, not to adjust. Skye-med means not born. This means it hasn't entered into time. This is when it's come about. And shar-ba means there's this appearing of what doesn't enter into time. This is the state of rigpa. But if one asks "Well what is this state of rigpa?" What it means is that in our daily life, whatever the thousands of thoughts and contacts we have, that presence in the very first moment.

Gzung-'dzin means subject-object. mtha' means the limits and mtha'-las-'das means beyond the limitations of subject and object. De-bzhin-nyid means the very condition of the self-perfectedness and void. Gnyug-ma means authentic or original. It means the state of consciousness which is self-arising. Ye-shes is wisdom. So then this awareness in the moment is the wisdom of the self-arising original primordial state. We'll take a break.

dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, nirmanakaya
[afternoon talk]

So we can continue with what we were doing this morning. With regard to this, there are three perfect states of Samantabhadra. Kun- bzang dgongs-pa: dgongs-pa means the state. Kun-tu bzang-po means the state of the Dharmakaya. Chos-gsum means the three perfected states. This is when we're speaking of the three primordial wisdoms, which are called the essence, the nature, and the energy. This means that the condition is void. This voidness is what we term the essence. This represents the state of the Dharmakaya. For those who don't know, dharma is a general term for the whole of existence. Kaya means the dimension of that. So in general they use the term Dharmakaya to denote this.

Since there don't exist any bag-chags, karmic traces, thus the essence is void. That is to say that karmic traces are something that exist at the relative level. When we speak of karma, karma is always something at the level of mind. When we speak of primordial wisdom, that means this is the condition beyond karma, the true condition as it is. So that's why the text says that it's beyond karmic traces.

The nature is clarity. And that is what is called the Sambhogakaya. As we said already, kaya means dimension. And sambhoga means riches or wealth and all the qualities like that in it. In Dzogchen we say the wisdom of the dimension of the body and its dimension. So this quality of self-perfection in its own nature manifests thus. Because then again this also is not relative in the level linked to mind. It's beyond concepts created by the mind, beyond the reasoning of the mind.

Then we speak of the Nirmanakaya which represents energy acting without interruption. And that's what's called the Nirmanakaya. Once again, kaya means dimension or body. And nirmana means as it manifests, as a manifestation. But in this case, when we say manifestation, it means something at the relative level also. If it's a matter of having some contact with a being who lives and dwells in the material dimension, then the Dharmakaya manifests in the human dimension as somebody like the Buddha Shakyamuni in a human form. Not only Buddha Shakyamuni but whatever realized being we speak of as manifesting in human form, this is a Nirmanakaya form.

So when a being has this capacity to manifest through its energy, manifesting without interruption, this is called the Nirmanakaya. But this is beyond attachment. It means that the individual is manifesting of his own free will. Such a being is not conditioned in any way by karma or passions. So these three, which is the essence which is void, the nature which is clear, and the energy which manifests without interruption, these three are all present in the self-perfected state of rigpa.

Then there's another verse. As soon as the presence arises. We said that this kind of presence is that suddenly as soon as a thought arises, in the very first fresh instant before the mind has entered into any judgment of it, we call that shes-pa. And when one is present in that state, that's also called rigpa. As soon as that shes-pa arises, and the mind hasn't entered into any dualistic concept yet, there

sense contact, chos-nyid

exists neither the level of subject nor object. It means that arising as an apparition of clarity, everything arises as our senses, through our senses.

When we open our eyes we see objects. Through our ears we hear sounds. In the same way, through all of our senses we have contact with earth, with objects. At first generally, we have the contact. Then this presence and sensation communicates to the mind, and then there is the mental judgment of it afterwards. When one still has not yet entered into mental judgment, this is called 'dzin-med, when there's no mental creation yet entered into things. But even if there's no mental construct yet formulated, nevertheless everything is very present and is there to the senses, present.

And so this word snang-ba which can mean vision also means sensation. It arises and appears externally. This means that there is always contact between the senses and that which is outside. Not entering into judgment, one remains present in this state. Chos means existence, whatever thing that arises, all phenomena, dharma in Sanskrit. Nyid means in its own condition. And when one wants to speak elegantly, one says dharmata in Sanskrit. But if you want to get more concretely into the real meaning of dharma, it means all phenomena.

All these things which arise have their own inherent condition. It may be that two things manifest seemingly separately and independently, and yet their inherent condition is just the same. It may be that that piece of wood and that glass of water appear as two separate things. And the way they function may present itself differently, apparently. But the true condition of all these materials is fundamentally and utterly the same. And this level of the energy of all phenomena is called chos-nyid, the condition of existence itself.

If one doesn't understand this real meaning and just elegantly uses the word dharmata, it's mere words of the mouth. There's not much sense. It's very important to understand this. If we speak of the individual's energy, the energy of rtal for example, it's not just like some geographic description. It's really a practical concrete thing. What's the relationship between a human individual and an object? Then you have to understand what is meant by this dharmata. If you don't understand this, then there's no way of actually integrating your energy.

And so this is why we say here chos-nyid, the vision of all phenomena. So not limiting oneself, not creating anything mentally, not entering into a concept, one remains present continually in this state. So in conclusion what we mean is that when a thought arises in the mind, one hasn't entered into a mental judgment yet of the thought. But it's not that one is sleepy in that moment. One is really absolutely present right there. If one finds oneself present in that state, that is beyond dualistic concepts. And even if you don't enter into a dualistic concept, nevertheless everything is absolutely present there, including all the contact with your senses.

For example, if I remain in that presence for a moment,

mother wisdom, void, Samantabhadra

even if somebody is doing something, I can make a mental note of it, even if I don't actually enter into following the thought about what he's doing. If a person were to pass in front of me, I've perfectly well seen that person. Because the functioning of the senses has in no way been blocked. But I'm not letting the mind enter into following with a judgment about what has happened. So it's a moment in which all the senses are present, and all the vision is present. And so, being present, being in that state, one finds oneself in what we call the dharmata. I hope you've understood that.

So then again this is another very important phrase. Skad-cig-ma means an instant. Shes-pa is that presence. Rnal-ma is not conditioned, not changed. Now that's the subject of the phrase. So this means that there has been an encounter with the mother wisdom of the dharmata. Remember we said dharmata means the condition of existence as it is, all phenomena present. So what does it mean, this meeting with the mother dharmata? By mother dharmata we mean the condition of existence as it is, from which everything, all phenomena, arises. That's why it's called mother.

In Tantrism in general, when there's a visualization, it's always said first of all that something arises out of the void. Certainly voidness means emptiness. There's nothing there. And out of this voidness there arises the mandala of air, for example. Then from that arise all the other elements. So this voidness means the condition of existence itself. That's why in the Dzogchen teaching we say this phrase kadag. Ka means from the beginning. Dag means pure.

So since everything arises from it, that's why we call it the mother. It gives birth to all other things. Since in general we're very conditioned by all concepts and our dualistic way of looking at things, we don't have any real understanding of the true shunyata. Even if we speak shunyata, it remains just at the level of an idea. It's a bit like when somebody says "my name is no name", and then no-name itself becomes a name. Because we have no way of understanding something without entering into some dualistic judgment to arrive at an understanding. So everything becomes a concept for us.

But now we're talking about a moment in which there's this first presence there and that presence itself is like a real meeting with this mother wisdom. It's not that we're reasoning or thinking about something. So this means the dimension of existence itself. So that means Dharmakaya. But one shouldn't make the mistake of thinking that by Dharmakaya we mean some sort of figure like the figure of the Buddha Samantabhadra sitting there with crossed legs. That isn't what we mean. That's the kind of idea that we have in general.

Above all when we speak about the teachings, the first kind of idea about the teachings that comes into people's minds is something on the level of a religion. You need some sort of god to pray to. So you could ask yourself "In the Dzogchen teachings, who is it that you make prayers to?" You could think that "Oh, it must be this Samantabhadra, this elegant figure there who's blue with crossed legs."

But you have to understand that this Samantabhadra is a

Samantabhadra, state of rigpa

symbol used and made by man to have an idea of this Dharmakaya. Dharmakaya itself is beyond color, beyond form, beyond body, and beyond position. It's the dimension of existence itself, as it is. That's the real sense of what we mean by Dharmakaya.

Rigpa, this means the state of presence, of consciousness. It's easy to understand that. We usually speak about the mind. We know what we mean by the mind. The mind is that which thinks, which always enters into all its confusion. So we can use the example here of reflections that are seen in a mirror. We know where reflections in a mirror arise from. That potentiality from which reflections arise in a mirror, that is what we use as an example and say it's like the nature of the mind.

But then again when we use these words "nature of the mind", that's only an idea. But what is required is that this thing we call the nature of the mind is something that really kind of (CLAP!) hits you, and that you enter into it. So as soon as a thought has arisen, one doesn't enter into a judgment of it, but remains in this present, aware of it. When one understands in this way what we've called the nature of the mind, then this state, this is what we call rigpa.

And so this state of rigpa, this is also lhundrub, which means that it's self-perfected in all its qualities, right from the beginning. It's not that there's a kind of condition of void which gradually slowly slowly manifests some quality in some way or other. It's that this dimension always already existed perfectly with all its inherent qualities and characteristics. And so when one finds oneself in this state of consciousness or knowledge, and then it manifests as one's existence, that is lhundrub. So this is the original, authentic, natural state of self-perfected Dzogchen.

So from this you can also begin to understand what we mean by Dzogchen. You can understand then that Dzogchen isn't a book. Dzogchen is not a religion. It's not a tradition. Nor is it a philosophy. It means a condition in which the individual can find him- or herself, a condition self-perfected right from the very beginning. And when one understand this and finds oneself in that state, then this is what we call Dzogpa Chenpo.

Everything that we mean when we speak about texts of the Dzogchen teaching, and transmission of the Dzogchen teaching, and so on, all these things are relative things that are linked in some way to the teaching. You don't want to think that Dzogchen is something that's found in the shrine room in the temples. It's something which is found in oneself.

The problem is that we don't notice it. We're not aware of it. And when we don't notice it, that's what we speak of as marigpa, or this fundamental ignorance. Finally when we do understand it, that's what we call rigpa. So it's very simple.

Now the text develops its second argument. We said that the first argument was to bring about an understanding. That we have now explained. Everybody has now understood perfectly. It's over. So if you haven't understood what we mean by the state of rigpa, it's very very important. You've got to train in whatever way, whichever way is possible, to find this state

stabilizing, Upadesha

of rigpa and understand it and know it.

Some people say "Oh this is all a bit difficult. It's a bit complicated." That's what they say. But if it was really that we were expecting something terribly easy, then it wouldn't have been necessary for the Buddha to have given at least a hundred volumes of explanations of what it's all about. So the Buddha explained it in very very many different ways, whether in the Sutras, in the Tantras, and so on.

But the truth is all in what I have now been explaining. You don't want to think that it's really too difficult or too complicated. But then again, you shouldn't think that it's too too easy. And then sometimes, as is said in the biography of Milarepa, when he went to a certain master after having made a whole mess in his life, he said "Look I want a teaching." And this master, which is the first master before Marpa that Milarepa went to, this master said "I've got this fantastic, wonderful teaching. It'll be sufficient. You just meditate. In the morning you'll be realized. But if you meditate in the evening, equally you'll be realized just right away then." And Milarepa was very satisfied by this. He didn't actually do anything at all.

And so in that kind of way, if you think it's really too easy, then nothing is concluded either. But it's also always possible that one might understand. Because the methods of the Dzogchen teaching are really and truly very special indeed. So if a person either already has a capacity or if he is lacking in some way and knows how to set about building up that capacity by one of those means or another, there's a way of arriving. So the first part was this rtogs-pa, which is to understand.

The second part the is called brtan-pa which means stabilizing or establishing. There are three things in the practice to establish this state of consciousness. They're called bsre-ba, lhug-pa, and bogs-dbyung. Bsre-ba in general means mixing. It also means reintegrating with things.

Lhug-pa is a very old word. It's a very ancient word from the Dzogchen tradition. It's not used much in the present day. But it means relaxed. That means that one's not charged up with tension. But this relaxed-ness doesn't mean just letting things hang out any old way. One is relaxed but this relaxation is always governed by a certain presence. And that's what we mean by lhug-pa, which is a very important word.

Then the third thing we have is bogs-dbyung. Bogs-dbyung means how to make this state of consciousness progress. It can also mean to benefit this state of consciousness. So there are these three points. So through these three things the principle is to bring one's practice into one's daily life.

So this word man-ngag in Tibetan is generally translated as Upadesha in Sanskrit. But then there are many people who don't know either what Upadesha means. But people would rather, if they've got to use a word, to use a word that's nice and elegant. And so at the very least they say "Oh it means something secret." So they close it up like that. If it's secret, nothing can be said about it. But if it's spoken about, it's not secret any more.

man-ngag, lung

The word man-ngag in Tibetan, the origin of the word man is a negative. There's a negative word "to be" in Tibetan, ma yin, or a word that says min. And so this is abbreviated to the word man. And this is where it comes from. Ngag means voice, and also oral. So it's something that's not written, only spoken. But even if it's spoken, this thing, it's not spoken publicly. It's something that is, kind of, a little bit hidden, and little by little might be revealed. That's what in truth the word man-ngag means.

But in the Dzogchen teaching in general there are three things, rgyud, lung, man-ngag. There are those three. rgyud means Tantra. When there's a Tantra it has its specific argument which may be put out in ten specific points.

And when we say a lung, it means that what is cited is the principle points of a whole Tantra. Sometimes there might be a hundred Tantras. And in these hundred Tantras there are a hundred arguments and they are very much expanded to their full degree. And one can't succeed in reading all the hundred volumes. And so a master may have pulled out just the principal points of the arguments there and united them together. And the characteristic title of that kind of book will be lung. So now if we think of all the Tantras which we have and maybe think that somebody has made a kind of resume of them, they might think "Well lung is like that." But then again, the concept of lung is really not that simple, that easy.

When we speak of the Dzogchen teaching for example, it means that there are seventy-four bum, that's seventy-four hundred thousand of those Tantras alone. So where are they all? It's said that these tantras are in the thirteen solar systems in which the Dzogchen teaching is spread. It doesn't mean we have all these Tantras available to us right here.

Let's take a master like Padmasambhava for example. A master who, to travel to another solar system, doesn't need some kind of rocket ship. He has capacities to get there other ways. It means somebody who has overcome the limits of time and distance. It means that he has the possibility to know about those Tantras that exist in those places. Let's take an example in which Padmasambhava manifests in a dimension other than this one here. Let's say that in this place, in front of Padmasambhava he encounters a hundred volumes of the Tantras of Dzogchen.

Padmasambhava isn't going to kind of make himself a transporter of those hundred volumes physically. But he'll take the essence of those teachings, and put them in one, two, three, maybe, texts. And by this means he communicates them to men. And that kind of text is called lung. If Padmasambhava had brought the whole of a Tantra, that would have been called a Tantra. That is the difference between Tantra and lung. So you can see that when we speak of lung, it's not really just that somebody's looked to the physical Tantra and made a physical resume of it. That's not all there is to this thing called lung.

Then there's what we've called man-ngag, the third. So whether in the Tantra or in the lung, there will be essential points which are difficult... [tape gap] ... Or through the practice the disciple has come across many things that he

man-ngag, ar-la-gtad
wants cleared up. And so the master will slowly slowly have communicated these things to the disciples.

And so the master will have talked a bit like this. He'll have said "Now, look. Don't think about it as a Tantra. Don't think about it as a lung. Here this is my personal experience. And this is what I'm going to communicate to you. Look, keep this a bit under your hat. Don't chat too much to other people about it." Then the disciple says to another disciple "Look, this is what the master sort of secretly told me." And then it's kind of passed on, being transmitted from the disciple of that first master to the disciple of a second one, and so on, down the lineage. So that's really what the characteristic of man-ngag is, what it means. So it should be clear what rgyud, lung, man-ngag mean in the Dzogchen teaching.

So with these three man-ngag, which is relaxing, progressing in the state, that is, relaxing, remaining in the presence, and progressing... So with these three you have to carry the practice forward in daily life.

And then it begins to explain how to integrate that which was explained in the first part. So how you have to train, at least at the beginning, the method of integrating, first of all. Remain relaxed on a seat or in a place which is comfortable for you. khong-glud means relaxed, not charged up. Usually people sort of get to a point when they sit down and say "Ah, now I'm going to do a practice." And right away they start getting kind of nervous with themselves about it. That's not how it is. It's more calm. Khong-glud means a bit like that, as if there was nothing about to happen at all.

Mdun means in front of you. Mkha' is space. Space could mean the open space of the sky, or it could be the space within the house. ar-la-gtad means looking like this into space. If you look onto a specific point, fixing on that point, that is called fixation. That's not called ar-la-gtad. ar-la-gtad means looking into the sky openly, but there's no actual point which you're fixing on. And the way of looking is as if any sense of I is vanishing into that openness of space. Or it's as if that openness of space was integrated into my own state.

So in a state of presence like that, remain in this condition of ar-la-gtad. But it doesn't just mean sitting like that looking into the sky. If one is just looking into the sky, that's called looking into the sky, not ar-la-gtad. But by ar-la-gtad we already mean that there's a process of reintegration of the individual that has been going on.

Yengs-med means without distraction. It means not distraction because it doesn't mean that you're sitting there looking into the sky in this open state of mind, but there's the thought going on "What am I going to do tomorrow? What shall I do this evening?" That's not what we call ar-la-gtad. Ar-la-gtad means that even though there's nothing to be done with the mind, the mind is simply present there with bare attention in the moment of looking. So you mustn't be distracted. Yengs-med means not distracted, being present.

Sgom-med means without meditation. That means to say that you shouldn't be thinking about something, nor should you mentally construct or create something. But just find

calm, movement, defects

yourself in this state of presence. And that's sgom-med, no meditation.

Lhug-par-bzhag, this means relaxed, but yet you're still governed by presence. So remain in this presence without changing or altering anything. When you remain like this, what will happen? So also this consciousness, this shes-pa which is present there like space, which has nothing in it of a mental creation or of any attachment or anything like that, it's just the simple presence of clarity, and which continues in this presence. There's no way of explaining what this is. It's just as it is. And so that's why it's called had-der.

So whether you remain there like that in the way that we do when we're practicing shinay, in a state of calm, or whether it's a moment in which thought is arising in the mind, whichever of those two kinds of state you find yourself in, there's no distinction, no dualism, no two ways.

When we're practicing shinay we find ourselves in a state of calm. There are no thoughts there. That moment with no thoughts and the calm presence, that's what we call shinay. But that itself is not what we can call contemplation. It's to reach contemplation. That's the state of experiencing calm. And then again when there's the other moment in which thought is arising and one notices thought, that is a moment of the experiencing of thought, the movement of thought.

The state of rigpa and pure presence is neither the movement nor the state of calm. But it's the presence which can be found in either of those states. So that's why it's called gnyis-med, neither belonging to this moment of calm nor to the moment of movement.

So when one finds this naked state of rigpa, that which is called mnyam-bzhag in general, when we're doing a sitting contemplation... So that state of mnyam-bzhag which we're doing when we're doing a contemplation which isn't in any way governed by defects or mistakes in one's practice of mnyam-bzhag.

Because in general when we learn many types of shinay practice, it's said that in your practice you will very often find problems or defects. It could be that you'll have the defect of bying-ba, which is being too sleepy. It seems as if you're dropping off to sleep after only a minute. Or it could be the state of rgod-pa when you're just too agitated and you can't succeed in remaining seated. And hundreds of thoughts arise in a kind of internal struggle. These are called defects of shinay. So it's explained that when each kind of defect arises, when this kind arises do this, when that kind arises do that, and so on.

But here in this case, we're speaking about being present in the state of rigpa. It means that you're beyond all defects. In the state of rigpa right from the very beginning, there has never existed any defect. So the principle is that you have to find yourself perfectly in this state. When you find yourself in this perfect state, there is no such thing as a defect that exists. As long as there are defects it means you're not finding yourself in that state. And that's a very important principle which is taught above all in the Dzogchen Upadesha.

So without either getting caught up in this defect of

state or rigpa, great contemplation being too sleepy or too agitated, finding yourself in this state, and there's a word to describe it, sal-le, which means totally clear and limpid. So it means that you're neither sleepy nor could there be anything that could resemble sleepiness, but there's always this presence. And it's not some kind of shallow presence. It's a really deep presence.

When this state is present, if one makes some change or other in one's position, I could, for example, call thoughts to me. I'm present there in that moment, in the state of rigpa, and the thought comes to me "Right! I'm going to go and get a coffee." Or "tonight let's drink a bottle of wine." So in that state I can create and call to me any thought I like. Or skyung means I can drive away all thought. O ned ?? means to insist repeatedly on something. Brnan spros means to multiply and enlarge in many many ways. These are examples. One can do any and all things, but it in no way damages, changes, or modifies this state of presence which one finds oneself in.

There are in the Dzogchen Semde ancient texts, it says tres du chi tsu ?? which is not used any longer today. It means that when one is present actually in this state of rigpa, it means that you can suddenly lie down rolling all over the floor like kids do when they're really uptight. chi tsu ?? means that you put your head down in a mind of somersault all over the ground. So even if you were to get into all this kind of tumbling about, none of that would disturb or agitate your state of rigpa.

So this is the same here, this dgug skyung brnan spros. It means that whatever you do, whatever you get up to, nothing can disturb it. G.yo-med means it doesn't move. Not moving means that there's no mental activity of thought. Moving means losing this state of presence and entering into a mental judgment, and thus losing the presence.

And it also says for example in the Sutras that the Buddha remained in samadhi without moving. Without any movement he talked with people. But his unmoving doesn't mean that he didn't speak, that he didn't think. He remained unmoving from that state of presence while he spoke and while he thought.

Rang-sar gnas-shing means that he remained in the dimension of his own state. Rang-grol means that whatever contact there is, it self-liberates of itself. A vision, whether beautiful or ugly, just self-liberates. If it's a sensation arising as a passion, it self-liberates.

So everything self-liberates. So at the end of this contemplation, because until one dwells fully all the time in this great contemplation, then there always remain the moment of contemplation, and the moment of non-contemplation. Even if one comes out of this contemplation, this presence is not conditioned by causes. Causes can be things which can condition you through all the senses.

If I'm sitting here in perfect contemplation like a Buddha and I think to myself "Now I've finished this contemplation. Now I'm going to go little by little out and get a glass of water. I want to remain as present as possible. And I go along like that over to the door, and outside arrives the fireman, and he says "Wo Wo Wo" with his

nyams

little gadget, maybe. And you might think to yourself "Oh what's that?", and so you run outside looking. And you see this really strange man.

So you see. I've already lost my state of contemplation. I'm distracted. So what's the cause of this? The cause is the noise made by that man that I saw outside. And his bleeper. So my presence has been conditioned by that cause. So when one doesn't lose this, and finds oneself in the state at whatever moment, this is the measure, the degree, let's say, of the stability of my contemplation.

Now you could say to yourself "I'm becoming quite good at this contemplation game." But when one does contemplation, there is also the nyams of experience that can arise. And these nyams, these experiences, can arise through vision, through sensation, and through sound, and so on, things like that. So when one dedicates oneself and trains like this in daily life, in practice, the characteristics of these experiences can manifest.

You may have visionary experiences which arise to you like the light of the sun, like the light of the moon. And there are ways of developing vision through internal energy. Or there may be a moment in which it seems that our normal vision is not present to us. I may be actually here in this house, but there may be a moment in which it seems this house isn't there. It's not a miracle that's taken place. It means I'm having a certain kind of meditative experience. Or I may be sitting there and it seems that my breathing has completely ceased.

So there isn't a kind of catalog of all these experiences. Above all, these kind of experiences arise and are controlled by our elements. And when one finds oneself in this state of rigpa, one relaxes all the byung ba ?? naturally, and that moment, different aspects of vision and sensation arise to me. And so there can arise different ways, different types of nyams.

Then in general, also, there can be nyams of rjes-thob which arise in moments when I'm not actually practicing. Through the capacity developing in one's practice, one feels that everything around one is no longer real. This is no longer at the idea level that one finds when one reads a philosophy book. It's really happening to you. Things just don't seem real any more. This is a principal manifestation of the diminishing of one's tension and attachment.

Or sometimes you could have a sensation of void. That shunyata which is spoken about so much seems to be actually happening to you. That also is a type of nyams. And a practitioner may have what he feels and describes as a sensation of fear of the void. If this arises to a practitioner, then what is happening to him is not something bad. It's an experience of practice.

Or it may be that the practitioner is capable of remaining in this state of rigpa and it appears that no thought arises whatever to him. Or it may seem that the practitioner has developed himself he feels to a level where he hasn't got to pay any particular attention to anything or do any specific practice any more, as if he couldn't make any mistake. He may have a sensation like that. That is also a

nyams.

When a practitioner has also his development of attainment, but by attainment you must remember that as we've already said, we're not talking about a construction, constructing anything. But if we want to see how the rays of the sun are, in some way or other you've got to be able to remove the clouds or mist which is obstructing the sun. And removing these obstacles slowly slowly, the sun suddenly starts to shine. So attaining means that. It means that the qualities of lhundrub begin to manifest as they are.

In this regard, so this practitioner who finds himself in the state of presence, he's not remaining just at the level of an idea. He's really entered into the actual dimension of the void, whether it's the thoughts that are coming into his mind, and also linked and relative to all the thought, his mental judgment. None of these things ever become something concrete for him. They always remain in their condition of voidness. Through this he attains and enters into his inherent underlying condition, which is the state of Dharmakaya.

Since he's not conditioned by thoughts or mental judgment, he also obtains the wisdom of mitogpa (mi-rtog-pa) which is not conditioned by thought. There's a lot which one could explain about this mitogpa. Right now we don't have time. Another time we'll do that.

And so by this means, one dissolves and diminishes one's obstacles, as if one's obstacles of karmic traces were purified. And so no particular notable passions can arise and disturb. What do we mean by notable in this case? If without even really thinking about it, suddenly right away I become angry, then this anger, we use an example, is also linked and similar to all other passions. When one remains in this state of rigpa, all the karmic traces are diminished, those things which are called obstacles, bagchag, the karmic traces. And then the passions of the individual controllable by ?? And so these passions don't arise to him any longer like wild horses which just jump up. bag-la-nyal means that the passions don't present themselves as out of control.

So even if that practitioner is a normal person, by normal we mean that we ourselves live in this human dimension of flesh and blood. That's our dimension. In the morning we eat breakfast. Then there's lunch to be had. And then in the evening, dinner. If we don't eat, we get uptight about it. We're hungry. That's what we mean by a normal person. If that person is capable of finding himself in the state of rigpa, nevertheless that individual has overcome the limits of being conditioned by transmigration. By "overcome" we mean that that person is no longer conditioned by all the things that arise to him in his life, like a person who just lives any-old-how.

We can understand this idea very well from the example of the television. Sometimes we go to look at the television and there's a very interesting program on. "Ah, very interesting, how beautiful, this program on samurai. Fantastic ability these samurai have." And we watch right through to the end what they can do. These samurai are fantastic. It seems, just a couple of seconds chip, chap, chop! They've chopped up three other people. And so we're very interested to watch

television, memory of Mr. Anderson

television.

Why is this? Because we know that on television what's happening is not real. And we know that the authors of that program, the directors, producers, actors, all those people, they've made it all happen deliberately. So we find it very amusing. If however we happen to have a samurai really turn up, and if he was suddenly super-present there with his great big sword chopping people up, nobody would find it so amusing.

And so you can see that being caught up and considering everything that's happening to us as being absolutely concrete and real, and then again having the attitude that "Well, really, everything is not quite so real." What's happening? Those are two different things. And the true practitioner of Dzogchen finds himself in the state of rigpa. He who understands and knows this unreality of all things, even if he finds himself in the concrete world right now, he's still not conditioned by anything which surrounds him. And so this individual doesn't suffer like those individuals who take everything to be utterly and absolutely real. And so, that's the difference.

And that's why we say that this person has overcome transmigration. And so this kind of person is called 'phags-pa'i-rigs, somebody who's overcome transmigration. And that's it for now.

[morning talk]

We're going to continue with what I was explaining yesterday. But there may be somebody who didn't hear what we said yesterday, who'll wonder what's going on. They'll think "He's just reading a book." So I'll say a couple of words about what it's about.

The principle is that we're making a retreat here. The principle of a retreat is that in the first place there's a bit of practice. There's a bit of explanation. And then there's a bit of practice. And this is a preparation for living one's daily life. Above all in the Dzogchen teaching, the teaching is a way of preparing oneself to enter into action in one's daily life.

We're doing a little retreat here. There's a principle here that I, Norbu, have dedicated my activity in this retreat and the retreat itself, to the memory of Mr. Anderson. And for this retreat in particular, I wrote this book at the beginning of the retreat, which is an explanation of what one does.

So this book has just been written, and it may be that to begin with, people won't understand exactly what's in this book, but it's going to be translated little by little. Understanding of it will develop, and then it'll become an important thing. Because in this book there is explained a great deal about how one concretely applies the Dzogchen teaching. It's not just like a philosophical explanation. It's something concrete, practical, which, simply speaking, one can apply in one's life.

And so yesterday the explanation continued up to a certain point in the book. And those of you who didn't hear the explanation of yesterday, there's the tape which you can listen to of yesterday's teaching. And so, since there is

relaxation, ornaments

always with a text the necessary transmission through the sound, I now intend to read as far as we've got. I'm going to read the Tibetan to you. Here's the lung. [recitation]. That's as far as we got.

Now it says the method of lhug-pa. Lhug-pa means, you'll remember, relax. But this relaxation is continually governed by presence of awareness. There's a word in Tibetan which is lhug pa ?? or lhur pa ??. Lhug-pa means to relax. But it can be that one is relaxed but there's no presence in this relaxation. It's sloppy.

This lhug-pa is a word which is used more in ancient texts. It's not a word in modern usage. Its meaning is that one is relaxed with presence. That's very important. When one is relaxed like that, and there's always the continuation of presence, in that moment, whatever external vision arises to us, it's not corrected. It's not changed in any way. There's no tampering with it. It just remains what it is in its own condition.

In the Dzogchen Upadesha they talk about the nangwa chogzhag (snang-ba cog-bzhag), the fourth chogzhag, and that means leaving vision as it is. So this means that one doesn't enter into reasoning, changing or altering anything with mental judgment.

Then whatever vision arises, whether it's beautiful or whether it's ugly, it has no way of conditioning the individual. And so, whatever that vision may be, it's simply like an ornament of the individual's own power or energy. And so it's said that everything that arises becomes as if an ornament of the individual.

This is just the same in principle, as the example of the mirror which we use. In this case the individual finds him- or herself in the true condition of the mirror. Finding oneself in the nature, the natural condition, of the mirror, means finding oneself in the state of rigpa. And so everything that arises to the individual, whether it's a thought, whether it's a vision or something external, everything that arises is like something arises of the individual's own energy. It's like reflections that arise in the mirror as a manifestation of the mirror's energy.

In the case of a mirror, reflections, whether beautiful or ugly, cannot in any way condition the mirror. It's true in the case of a mirror that it's not conditioned in any way. It doesn't change anything if something ugly is reflected in it. It's simply that the capacity of the mirror itself is manifesting to it. If things arise in the mirror very clearly and limpidly, that means that the mirror is functioning very well... [tape gap] ... So whatever arises doesn't create mental problems for the individual. That's why we can say that what arises has become as if an ornament.

There's a famous saying of the master Phadampa ??. Phadampa was the master of the lady master Machig Labdron (ma-gcig lab-sgron ??). When Phadampa gave advice to his disciples, he said "The individual is not conditioned by his vision. But he's conditioned by attachment to that vision. And that attachment is something that arises from the interior, as it were, of the individual. It is not something inherent in the object or the vision itself." That saying is

ornaments, sense contact

linked to what we have written here. So objects, or whatever arises to the individual, cannot condition the individual in any way. It's like an ornament.

So, relaxed in this way, with presence, whatever it is that arises becomes as an ornament of the individual's own energy. So in this position there is the presence of the state of rigpa. This is an uncorrected state, not conditioned by thought, clear, present and naked. By naked we mean that in the instant that the thought arises, one finds oneself right there present. There has been no entering into mental judgment or being conditioned by the thought that arises in the instant. And so one's true condition in itself, as it is present there, is present with all its own characteristics, and characteristics of the body are present too. So leave it as it is, and remain in that condition as it is. Relaxed like that, remain in this condition.

So now here we're talking about this famous tshogs-drug ?? . What does this tshogs-drug mean? One doesn't go into reasoning or judging about an object. Our senses have a contact with an object, let's say for example we see something. As soon as we've seen this vision, there's a communication through the senses to the mind. Then right away the mind generally begins to enter into judgment. With this mental judgment one decides whether it's good or bad, whether it's acceptable or something you want to reject. Through this arises what we call the passions. And through the passions we accumulate what is called karma. And thus one continues in transmigration.

This is not only true of sight and vision. It's also true of all the other senses, such as sounds which conditions the ear. You hear a sound with the ear first. The ear communicates to the mind, and then one understands and decides about what it is that one has heard, whether it's beautiful or ugly, whether it's something to accept or reject. If someone said an ugly swear word to you, you enter into reason saying "What a nasty swear word he said to me." And from that arises anger. If one applies this anger, puts into action, you accumulate bad karma.

The same with something that's beautiful. You might hear the sound of music for example. And you think "Ah wonderful. I really like that." And through that reasoning you build up what we call attachment. And it's the same with all the senses, with taste, for example, and with the smelling. First there's the sense contact. That leads to the mind. And then there's a reasoning, a judgment of the mind.

So tshogs drug means all the senses and their contact with the objects. When there is this contact, don't enter into any reasoning. But when we say don't enter into reasoning, that doesn't mean block. That's very important to understand.

Once an Italian person came to me. He said he was somebody who did meditation. So I asked him "What kind of meditation have you done?" He said that he'd been following the Zen Center and the teaching there for many years. He said "I know how to do all the Zen practice. But I'd like to learn a bit how they do this Tibetan meditation. I'd like to know if it's really the same as this Zen business." So I naturally

Zen, not reasoning

wanted to know a bit what kind of Zen meditation had he been doing?

He was really certain that Zen meditation was something completely unknown to Norbu. But that's not the way it is with Norbu. Because although Zen is a slightly different teaching, it's nevertheless a teaching of the Buddha. So I asked him "What did you do? What have you learned?" He said "I've learned to block thought." He said "I've always tried to stop thought like this but I don't always succeed. It's not that easy."

So I explained to him that in the Buddhist Sutras, whether Zen or not-Zen, there is a concept there of mitogpa (mi-rtog-pa). In Zen there's very widespread a thing using this mitogpa in which you learn to enter into thought, but you remain more in a sort of void state. But this doesn't mean that you negate thought. So I said to him "Look. Maybe you're mistaken." He said "No, no. I'm not mistaken. I've followed perfectly in Zen teaching." He said "Well maybe it's just that you Tibetans don't do this." And I said "That's okay with me. If you're that convinced, do what you like."

So this mi-dpyod-pa means don't enter into reasoning, but it's not the same as saying "block thought". For example on this table here there's this book. Supposing I take this book away, or I could leave it there as if it wasn't important, didn't come into things. That's two different things. To block it would be as if I were taking the thing away and trying to eliminate it. But not entering into reasoning and mental judgment means leaving it just there where it is, but it doesn't disturb me.

So whatever contact there is between the senses and objects, don't enter into reasoning and mental judgment. And continue in this presence, without interruption. But when we say without interruption, that doesn't mean that I have to construct or create this "without interruption". When one finds oneself in the state of rigpa, its inherent quality is that which appears. So there's nothing to interrupt. If the sun arises, it's not that one has to construct the rays of the sun. To shine forth with rays is the inherent nature of the sun itself.

So when one is present in the state of rigpa, everything continues without interruption. And everything arises as an ornament of one's own energy. And this presence itself is self-perfected in this state. This is this famous word which is defined as lhundrub in the Dzogchen teaching. This word lhundrub is very important in Dzogchen. If we speak only of what we define on the one hand as this kadag which is pure right from the beginning, then it would be that Dzogchen would be very similar to Zen. But when you have also this understanding of lhundrub, that makes it very different again from Zen. This is a very simple way of understanding what the difference is between Zen and Dzogchen. You can understand it through what's the principle of lhundrub.

Then when you come to a kind of wider explanation of what lhundrub is, there are eight explanations. We speak of the primordial state and we speak of its three primordial wisdoms. And we talk about the way that energy manifests, and what the particular characteristic ways of energy manifesting are.

Zen, non-dual state

Through these methods it's explained how one can reintegrate one's energy and find oneself in the dimension itself of these manifestations. All this is called lhundrub.

There's nothing of this in Zen at all. So it's very simple. One can see immediately what the difference is. Many people remain thinking "Ah, Dzogchen and Zen. They're pretty much the same." But each method has its own particular characteristic way of working, and that's what you have to understand.

'dzin med means without concept. Let's say for example I see a tree. That means my faculty of sight has had contact with that tree. Then when that sense impression has been recognized by me, has reached me, I see a tree. I recognize it as a tree. The presence of that recognizing is the state of rigpa itself.

But then when I get into it and I say "Ah! now that's a tree", reasoning about it, "That's a big tree, and some of those branches look as if they're drying up a bit", that's what we call reasoning. And that's what we mean by 'dzin pa. And then 'dzin med is the negative of that. It means you haven't entered into that reasoning. And then there's a wave, as it were, a continuation of thought. And one finds oneself in this wave continuing. That's 'dzin med. One finds oneself present.

Rig pa'i rtsal means that one finds oneself present in the state itself, of the manifestation of the state of rigpa. Everything that we see and everything that we have contact with is a manifestation of our own energy, at the level which is known as rtsal. Everything that we see as a reflection, parallelly, in a mirror, whether beautiful or ugly, that is what we call the reflections in a mirror. So the whole dimension that finds itself around us, that itself is self-perfected as a manifestation of the rtsal of rigpa itself.

And so one continues in this presence in a non-dual state. By non-dual we mean that there is no consideration here of a subject perceiving an object. Or there's no sense of this on the one hand and that on the other. There's no beautiful and ugly. So there's no dualistic concept whatever. But everything is rather present as an ornament which arises to us. Dualistic concepts arise when one enters into the mind and its functioning. So one finds oneself in this non-dual state and continues thus. So with this state, and being present and relaxed with that presence, that's what we mean by lhug pa.

When we're speaking of a practice like mnyam bzhag and rjes thob, mnyam bzhag means the moment when you remain present in the state of rigpa. rjes thob is the moment when the formal session of meditation is finished. When a person has become very profoundly experienced in practice, then we say that it's the great contemplation. Then the practice of this person doesn't remain limited by sections of time that you can say there's a formal practice happening and what was happening after the practice.

As long as a person is a beginner, there are always these two moments, the moment when he's applying the practice, and the moment afterwards. Then it's always explained how the

mnyam bzhag, rjes thob, passion moment of contemplation in the formal practice is found and how the behavior should be after the formal meditation practice. In this state of mnyam bzhag one is remaining in this nondual state of rigpa, mnyam bzhag. One doesn't enter into reasoning about the objects of the five senses.

Even though one doesn't enter into reasoning, everything can arise to you purely, limpidly, and there's no movement, unmoving. We've already explained yesterday what's really meant by this non-moving. It doesn't mean that the object itself is not moving. It means that one is unmoved. One doesn't move out of the state of rigpa, and follow after creating thought about the object.

The example we gave yesterday is that I'm sitting here in contemplation. I think I'll get up and go and get a glass of water. I start walking out in contemplation to get this glass of water. But I see somebody outside, and seeing the person outside, I'm distracted. And it interrupts my contemplation. And when this is interrupted, this is called gyowa (g.yo ba), the gyowa of the state of rigpa.

There's a Tibetan phrase that says the Buddhas was staying in the state of migyowa (mi g.yo ba), non-movement. Some people think that this means that the Buddha was fixed there, unmoving, like a statue, for many years. But migyowa isn't referring to the physical body particularly. Sometimes it also can be used for the physical. But here what's meant rather, is that the presence of the state of rigpa doesn't move and enter into mental judgment. 'dzin med you've already understood. It means one doesn't enter into mental judgment and reasoning. And so, whatever arises, one remains present and remains in that presence.

Then as far as rjes thob is concerned, the moment after practice, taking the example say, of vision that appears ugly or beautiful to the sight, even if something appears to the sight, one remains there present as if the thing was not at all real, had no inherent reality at all. But the sight is only one example of the senses. It's the same for all the other senses, and also for any passion that would arise to you. These have no inherent reality for you whatsoever either.

And thus, through the contact of one's senses with their objects, through all that arises to you as vision or otherwise, everything that arises to you becomes a means for entering into, and remaining in, wisdom. And this is a particular explanation of objects that surround us and the contact that they have with the senses.

So now we can speak about the subject, the individual him- or herself. Whatever passion, which we can describe as the five poisons, arises, you know perfectly well what we mean, all of you I imagine, by the five poisons. The sense of pleasure is not a poison of course. Neither is its origin a poison, nor is it when present a poison.

But it becomes a poison when one doesn't find oneself in its origin of arising, when one doesn't find oneself in the state of rigpa. Then it becomes a poison, what can condition you. And then when the four demons are often spoken of, there's the demon of the passions. They're demons because they interrupt and hinder one's realization. And they become

a principal means of one being forced to continue in transmigration.

And the five poisons, that aspect of things, whatever thought arises relating, linked, to these five poisons, don't enter into a thought, but remains there present with the presence of the thought itself. If you enter into a thought, then that passion becomes a poison for you. It becomes potent and capable of creating lots of problems for you. Because the human being becomes a slave of the passions. But if one doesn't let oneself be conditioned in that way, then that which arises is just simply like a reflection. It has no inherent reality for you. And then as these things arise, remain present and relaxed with the presence of it arising.

This is a very important point to understand. Because many people think that when we speaking of a passion self-liberating of itself, they think that what's involved here is a kind of method of an antidote which is used by the person to block that which is arising. Practically speaking, they think that it means that you don't let that thought arise. It's almost as if you looked into the face of that object, like in gcer grol, and it self-liberates.

But here that's not what we said to do. We said lhug pa. So what did we say that lhug pa meant in principle? We said it meant relaxed. So it means that if I feel a passion arising, it's as if I kind of relax that whole passion. There's no blocking. It's not as if I've got to go looking for some antidote to block that passion. It's not that I just left that passion any old way as it were. It's simply that the passion is governed by my presence of rigpa. And so this means that one hasn't eliminated or done away with this passion through an antidote.

And it hasn't either been transformed by any particular method. Such methods as are used in Tantrism as I've often given examples. When I start to get angry, in that kind of method I might transform myself into a fantastically potent heruka. And then continuing in the presence of this anger, I continue like that. But the whole direction, the whole aspect, of this anger has been changed. Because now it is the anger, the rage, of the heruka. That's what we mean by transforming.

Here it says it's neither a way of transforming nor a way of eliminating it through some application of antidotes. But with this relaxed presence, nyon mongs lam long means that one's passions themselves become like one's own inherent qualities manifested. Lam long. Lam means the way. Here we mean that when one wants the way itself to become real for one's realization, that's what we mean by lam long. It's a real way of realization. Rangdrol (rang grol) means self-liberation. So thus arises the self-liberation of passions, and one has awakened the path aspect.

As far as nyams of the practice are concerned, then they arise as voidness and as clarity, as visions and voidness which is found present in that state. Or also they can be found present in a state of the continuing wave of the movement of thought. Or they can be found in the presence of the sensation of pleasure which is bde ba, or in one's non-dual state. So thus many types of experiences can arise,

nyams, attainments

whether of voidness or pleasure, or of mitogpa.

All of these types of nyams are called shes nyams which are linked to the experience of the individual. The types of nyams of vision are called nyim ?? nyams. So these are more nyama ?? shes pa, which are nyams of presence. We haven't yet said what you've got to do when these nyams arise. But then again you don't really have to say anything about that, because there's nothing that you have to do.

Why are there nyams there? Because they're inherent characteristics of the practice's functioning. If we make a fire, it's logical that there will be smoke. If there's no smoke, there's no fire. But nobody tells you what you've got to do when smoke comes out of a fire. And so when you do practice there's always nyams. And maybe if there are no nyams, this means something is missing. And so this would mean perhaps that the individual needs to work a bit more with clarity.

And so here we always speak about the presence of the nyams. This is relating to the obtainment of the body and its dimension, as if one had entered into the state of knowledge of the condition of existence, which includes the whole of existence. This self-perfected non-dual presence in this state of lhundrub. This state of lhundrub is present as it is, uncorrected, as if it were a great thigle. By a great thigle we mean something without angles, without limits. But around that center, the whole of the energy is self-perfected. And so one obtains and the whole of the dimension of the body of wisdom becomes real for one, oneself. And the wisdom of clarity arises for you.

As far as objects are concerned and their contact with the senses, then we have many objects. But now the individual is no longer conditioned by whatever object there is present. It's as if the individual is now living with the real experience of the fact that whatever is arising to him has no inherent reality. It's like a reflection in a mirror. And so the individual, and all vision and objects arising to him now, really and truly experiences the presence of what we called the Dharmata, the condition of phenomena as it is.

So the practitioner has now overcome completely the obstacle of passion. The primordial wisdom of the state of rigpa has come forth and arisen. So now the whole of the way of behaving and attitude of the practitioner can no longer be in any way negative. So the practitioner is no longer limited by any such thing as having to learn what is good to do and what is bad to do, what one can do, and what one can't do. There are no limits like that any longer. The individual has overcome the limits of the passions.

And he's developing his clarity. Thus naturally, he or she becomes more aware, and is no longer a slave of the objects, but is self-governing out of his or her own awareness. Thus it cannot be said that there can be negative things arising from this individual's conduct. All the negative conduct that arises in an individual arises through the lack of that individual's clarity or the lack of his awareness. But when the individual is liberated from the obstacle of the karmic traces and passions, now this practitioner has arrived at the level of being a true

progressing

Bodhisattva, that is to say, superior to and beyond the ordinary person's capacity.

Now we'll explain what's called the bogs dbyung, the third topic. As we said when we began translating this texts, there are three principal topics. To understand is the first one. Then the second is to stabilize that knowledge. And then the third is what we call bogs dbyung, which is to make progress. And there was what we spoke of as sewa or lhugpa, which is mixing or integrating. And then we also explained how relaxing things, one is present and one liberates oneself.

So now you understand what remains to be spoken of, and that's this matter of making things progress. To progress in or to benefit this practice, in the uncorrected, unadjusted, untampered-with state of self-perfection, or rigpa, the presence of this state of rigpa in the very moment itself, the very first instant in which a thought arises, lhan ner bzahag means remain in this as the state itself is present. ma bcos means not correcting, not being conditioned by anything, the state of rigpa which is not conditioned by thought.

Mitogpa doesn't mean that there are no thoughts. It means that one is not conditioned by thought. When one is in the state of rigpa there's always room. There's always the dimension and possibility of thought arising. If this wasn't so, there would be no way of integrating contemplation with one's daily life. Because we have our three levels of existence, of body, voice, and mind. What the body does is move. And the voice is involved with breathing and also with speaking. And the mind is that which thinks.

So if a person goes to the office, for example, and he's sitting and walking and doing things around the desk, it's necessary for that person to speak with people. But you can't speak without there being the function of the mind. Because a human being isn't a tape recorder. So that means that perfectly there are all these functions of body, voice, and mind. If one really and truly finds oneself in the state of rigpa, in contemplation, how can you do all of these things? One could think "Well in that kind of circumstance, contemplation is just not possible." ... [tape gap] ...

And some people may say "Oh I can't stay in contemplation all the time. I've got so many things to do." This means that one hasn't become familiar with, and used to, contemplation. One hasn't been making any progress. You have to remember that the state of rigpa and the presence of the state of rigpa are outside and beyond time. And when we say beyond time, we mean also outside the confines of the mind, never mind the body and the voice.

And so one can find oneself perfectly in the state of rigpa and contemplation, and enter into all the actions of body, voice, and mind. This is something very important to understand. In the state of rigpa, it's perfectly possible for all kinds of thought to arise. But not only can thought arise, there's also the way, if one knows how to apply the state of rigpa, of actually putting those thoughts into action and into function. So one is clearly present in a continuous state of presence.

So this continuation in the state of rigpa, so present and so clear, means to continue in it stably without becoming

mnyam bzhag, rjes thob, nyams

distracted. So you need to understand what we mean by "without becoming distracted" when we speak of the Dzogchen teaching. It doesn't involve a principle of some kind of mental policeman who keeps coming up inside you saying "Pay attention!" and then at once I have to regulate my self into attention, and I block everything in my circumstances that I might otherwise be trying to do. That's not what we mean by the state of rigpa.

We've said it's lhug par sbyong, which is very important. It means relaxed and present at the same time. It doesn't mean that there's got to be some kind of mental or physical charging up. Not distracted, one remains continuously present. You don't want to think of it or confuse it with something which involves kind of charging yourself up to maintain that presence.

As far as the mnyam bzhag is concerned, the continuation in the contemplation, don't allow yourself to develop defects of either being too sleepy or too agitated. We've also already explained yesterday that in the true state of rigpa itself, there can be no defects. All existence as it is present to you, is also linked to the underlying condition of existence itself, the Dharmata. And the whole of one's vision which is arising to you is as an ornament. And it is also the Dharmata itself. And so since this principle is always present, there is the way in which one can reintegrate one's energy. It's very important to understand this.

With regard to rjes thob, rjes (afterwards) refers to the state of mnyam bzhag, contemplation. So this means don't let one's presence be conditioned by causes. As soon as I've finished my state of contemplation, I start getting up. Certainly my idea was always to continue in the presence as much as possible. I see somebody out the window and he's saying "Norbu, Norbu, come here. Have a beer!" And the thought "beer" arises right away. And my presence finds itself a bit obstructed. The cause is beer and that person outside the window that I've seen. So it means don't let it happen like that. Remain capable of continuing, even if there's much happening. So one continues, and this is the nature of the mind itself in its own inherent purity.

As regards the nyams of the practice, one finds oneself in a non-dual condition, whether one is engaged in meditating or not. By meditation here we don't mean something which one has to do as a kind of meditation which involves mental activity. But rather it means finding oneself in this state of presence. So one isn't finding oneself in a situation where one has mental decisions like "I am now in the state of presence" and "Now I'm not in the state of presence". There's no kind of mental limitation going on like that.

So now whatever vision it is that surrounds the individual, whatever it is, arises as the energy of the individual's contemplation itself. So now you can understand that there's already integration taking place. So as the condition of the nature of existence itself is, of all dharma, there's no movement involved from the state of rigpa, from the Dharmata itself. It is just as it is and finds itself present as it is. So you have to understand what "not moving", in that situation, means. We've already explained that several

times.

As far as attainment or realizations in practice are concerned, whatever kind of vision arises or doesn't arise, it all is purified in the state of the Dharmata. By "purified" we don't mean here that one has as if eliminated something by mental activity. Rather we mean that one finds oneself in the true condition of what is, as it is, and thus all is purified. It's a condition.

What we don't mean is that there's an attempt to kind of do something like removing the reflections that are in the mirror. But rather the individual finds himself or herself in the actual condition of the capacity of the mirror to reflect, and thus all that might arise in the mirror is automatically pure. So all is purified, as it were, eliminated into its own underlying inherent condition.

So thus one contains the condition of the non-dual body. And so there arises the wisdom that has no mental considerations. That means there's no way that it can be disrupted, like non-discriminating wisdom. And one is overcoming the obstacles of shes-bya, of knowledge, which we've already described as a very subtle kind of obstacle, and could be even the slightest mental trace of a thought about contemplation in one's contemplation.

Thus one obtains the state of knowledge of the condition of things as they really are, and of the nature of the existence of all dharma. And one is liberated from all considerations of knowing and non-knowing. And so this practitioner can now be considered as somebody who has overcome the normal condition of individuals. So one is now beginning to be someone who could be considered illuminated or realized. That is the description of the practice of the day. Now we'll have a pause.

[afternoon talk]

Now if you're ready, we'll continue. We've explained the whole of the practice of the day. Now it's the practice of the night. The practice of the night is one of the most important things in one's life, but many people say that they don't succeed in this practice. They say that when they try to do this practice they can't get to sleep. Or they say that they don't succeed in remaining present while going to sleep, but that their mind becomes distracted. And then many people also forget that they are practicing. That's fairly normal. I get heaps of letters that tell me "Oh. Years and years go by. I've not succeeded in this practice of the night."

Maybe if somebody had really understood it, they would succeed. Here there's a sufficiently clear explanation, I think. There are, precisely speaking, two practices. It's not that there's two types of practice, but it's according to the capacity of the individual who has to practice. As far as the practice of the night is concerned, there are two principles: the practice applied when one is going to bed at night, and the practice of waking up in the morning.

The word srod means the moment you go to bed. In this practice it's not necessary that you have a kind of specially fixed timetable. But you have to go to bed at a time determined according to the condition of the individual. So

relaxed senses, bsam gtan

it perhaps really means evening. So it really means a time like nine, ten, or eleven o'clock. But if there's somebody who always goes to bed at one or two in the morning, they may think "This moment of srod is already gone and past. I can't do this practice." But that's not what it means. It means the moment when you go to sleep. That's the principle of it.

Then it talks about tho rangs. Tho rangs means the dawn. But this also doesn't only mean doing a practice just at dawn. There are people who wake up at eleven o'clock in the morning, or at ten o'clock, seven o'clock, eight o'clock. It's already a long time after dawn. And such people won't see the dawn for months on end. They say to themselves "What a pity. Dawn's already gone. I can't do this practice." That's not what it means. What it means is "when you wake up", practically speaking. But when we're considering a person in a normal condition, such a person goes to bed in the evening or night and gets up in the morning, normally. So the example here is a bit like this.

As regards the practice of the night, it says dbang po mnyam par bzhag which means that all the senses remain relaxed. Certainly when one is asleep, it's not that the senses remain awake. But this is a practice which is done before going to sleep, not after you've gone to sleep. Of course, before going to sleep, it's sure that there is the functioning of all the senses present. So when you get into bed, instead of thinking to yourself "What did he say? What is it I'm supposed to do?" what one does is one relaxes all the senses and doesn't let them enter into any conditioned state. And that's how you practice.

And this practice must also be integrated with one's sleeping. bsam gtan means it's also integrated with the state of rigpa. bsam gtan means that the mind is kept a little bit controlled, above all. Generally we use these terms, and we create confusion with all the terminology. Many people translate bsam gtan as samadhi in Sanskrit, which means contemplation. If somebody is in the true state of rigpa, then that could be that they are actually in contemplation.

But this direct word bsam gtan doesn't really mean contemplation. Bsam means to think. And thinking means doing something with the mind. gtan means to stabilize something. It means holding something firmly, resting upon something. When we do fixation for example, we fix on an object. With great attention we fix sharply on this object, and it creates a great deal of attention bringing the mind to one point. Bsam is all the thoughts. gtan means that they're held there. There's no way in which thoughts can enter into function.

And when one has become familiar with this, you can relax slowly this attention, and practice without such sharp acute fixation of attention. And then developing in this way, one enters the state which is known as shinay. Then when one is able to work more with the movement of thought, then that is called lhagtong. And so when you work in this way, carrying things forward in that kind of direction with that kind of pattern, that's what we mean by bsam gtan.

So also for this sleeping practice, there is at least a minimal effort of attention required to hold one's attention there. So this bsam gtan which is going to be spoken of

AH, thigle

afterwards has to be integrated with one's sleep. So sleeping with this bsam gtan means keeping that state of meditation present, and slowly slowly going to sleep with the presence of that bsam gtan. In the moment of going to sleep, smin mtshams means right here in the center of the forehead, one visualizes there a white letter AH.

Usually in the Dzogchen Upadesha, this white AH is visualized in the center of the body. Because when the white AH is visualized between the eyes up there, there's too much sense of presence, and it's difficult to go to sleep. But if the person has no difficulty generally going to sleep, the best place to visualize the AH is there between the eyes. Because visualizing the AH here between the eyes like this, there is right away an automatic control of all the prana.

There are many ways of controlling the prana in which one visualizes there a white thigle. If one has a difficulty in visualizing the AH there and going to sleep with that realization, then you have to proceed in another way. As is always said in Dzogchen, the practitioner must be aware and ideal. The method shouldn't be the thing that regulates the individual. The individual should regulate the method. Even if it's very very difficult, but I succeed in visualizing this white AH here, but then I don't succeed in going to sleep, that's no good. The individual has to know how to regulate his own condition.

Then it says 'od lnga'i thig le, which means a thigle of five colors. This already is less problematic for going to sleep than this white AH. In the Bonpo Dzogchen tradition, there's a visualization of three thigles of the five colors at the center of the body. These thigles are described as being like peacock's eggs. When they're not over-brilliant, shining towards the external, then it's easier to get to sleep. If one succeeds in doing a visualization with a thigle of five colors, that's very good for self-control of all the elements, auto-control of all the elements.

So the thigle shines there in that place, about the size of a pea. It means like a pea. Remain in that presence. gtad means directing and fixing your attention on that. lhod de means that after that sharp fixation you have to relax. If you don't relax, sleep won't come to you quickly. So slowly slowly go to sleep, not conditioned by thoughts. That means don't create a lot of thoughts and don't enter into thinking about something.

If somebody goes to bed and they're bound up with thinking about having a fantastic practice, then they make perfect visualization of this five-colored thigle about the size of a pea, and there it is present. And at this point they know they've got to relax a bit. So as one relaxes it's very easy to become conditioned by thoughts arising. Clearly one shouldn't go and block those thoughts.

But if one doesn't block, and if one also isn't sufficiently capable of finding oneself in the presence of the state, it's very easy for many thoughts to arise. And one could become distracted by them. Relaxing like that, sleep may not come right away. Suddenly you notice that you're involved in a whole lot of thought about something. Then again you call back once again that presence of it. After a

natural light, precise presence
 few cycles of this process, you don't even notice that you're becoming distracted.

So what's meant here is that you mustn't be conditioned by thoughts. dri mas means like becoming solid or dirty by thought. sbags means mixed a bit, like a piece of butter that's fallen in the dirt. You could try picking it up and sticking it back on the plate, but you'll see a bit of dust and a few hairs stuck in it. In this case you'd say the words "dri mas sbags" about this butter. Don't become like that.

It's not that one is controlled about the function of the five senses. It's not that you've done some particular meditation. But there's nevertheless the continual presence of this relaxed state. In that condition, go to sleep. Going to sleep with that presence means that you've integrated your sleep with the presence. That's called rang bzhin 'od gsal. It's the natural light. Then you find yourself in the condition of the dharmata, the condition of existence itself which is not conditioned by thought.

This now deals with what happens if a person is not capable of visualizing as has been described. "Not succeeding" doesn't refer to somebody who's not capable actually of seeing the visualization, but it's for somebody who makes the visualization and yet can't get to sleep. People who have that problem must do as follows. In the moment when thought comes, and certainly when you go to bed thought will come, it could be pleasant or unpleasant, whatever. But there is the continual functioning of the mind.

When a thought arises, more or less at it's beginning, it's not even necessary that a thought should come. There's also the presence of the senses and their function. Sure, when we're lying there on the bed it's always possible that we'll hear somebody walking around, or maybe somebody goes and flushes the toilet loudly. So our senses are functioning and they have contact. It's not that one is having to get into looking behind all these sense contacts. But nevertheless one maintains a presence with regard to them. It's an instant, a second of presence, of whatever is arising. That's called skad cig shes pa. So it's necessary that one find a calm state.

It's not on the other hand necessary that one should absolutely have a state of movement either. But one finds oneself in the simple presence of bare attention, a presence which has nothing to define it. seng ge ba means there is this precise presence there. In this presence itself, continue in this limpid presence. Even if other things come into that presence, just continue and go to sleep like that. Everyone can do that. That in no way will impede people going to sleep.

But if you get caught up in charging up the mind by thinking too much or paying too much attention to any one thing, that will prevent your going to sleep. That's true for the condition of all individuals. Somebody may say "Oh, ah, me. I don't have problems of going to sleep." But now after hearing this they start worrying. They go to bed and they say "Maybe I'm going to have a problem, too, going to sleep." And they start worrying. And even this person who previously didn't have a problem about going to sleep is going to succeed

mental traces, natural light wonderfully in creating a problem of not being able to go to sleep.

And we can create all these things through our worrying. And we get caught up in many things through distraction. Some people may think "Well, if I maintain this kind of presence, how on earth is it possible I should go to sleep". But presence, is not what damages one's sleep. You don't want to be confused about this. What damages sleep, what interferes with sleep, is worrying and thought. Being present in this condition of presence won't damage one's sleep.

One goes to sleep like that. This sleep is the cause of being able to enter into the condition of existence, the dharmata. The function of all our senses finds itself in the condition of the Dharmadhatu, in the true state of rigpa. Until one has gone to sleep, for that whole period, one can find oneself present in that state. And thus one finds oneself as if in a state of contemplation. One overcomes or diminishes the traces, the bag chags traces, which are physical traces, or traces of vision. By vision we don't mean some phantasmagoric vision. We mean just the vision of our daily life. And by mental traces, we mean limits of the mind, attachments of the mind, all those things.

Why does it say here diminishes or overcomes? Let's examine for example, physical traces. Now for example, we live in our material dimension. If we feel a bit cold, we are harmed by that. We feel sad. If we have to go outside somewhere, we have to go through a door. All this is a limiting of ourselves through material things. But when one goes to sleep, it means that one's senses have vanished internally. When one finds oneself in the presence of the state of rigpa, then one is not conditioned by the material body. If one is present in this state, there's a way of overcoming these problems, and it will also influence one's daily life pattern.

So this is why we speak of the traces of the daytime and traces of the mind. Thoughts don't arise, and one finds oneself in the condition of existence itself. It's true! Right up until the moment when we begin to dream, right until we start dreaming, there's no functioning of the mind any longer. yid mi 'byung. Yid means mind. Mi 'byung means there's no thoughts arising. This means the measure of one's finding oneself, the degree of one's finding oneself, in the state of the natural light. This means that the practitioner is succeeding really in finding him or herself in the state of the natural light.

A person who is capable of sleeping like this will also automatically gain mastery of awareness in their dreams and will also be able to govern their awareness at the moment of dying. Because if one is capable of governing one's going to sleep with awareness, one is also capable of dying with awareness. Certainly when you go to sleep, and certainly when you die with this presence, in the bardo of the nature of existence all the various apparitions arise to you as the qualities of lhundrub itself will be recognized as being what they are. And when one has this recognition of the qualities of lhundrub, this is called the realization of the Sambhogakaya. So it's very important.

bardo, awareness in dreams

Then if one succeeds in going to sleep like this with presence, it means that one develops the mastery of awareness of the dream state. Because these phases are very similar. Let's take an example. Going to sleep is equal to dying. This going to sleep in the state of the natural light is equal to, the same as, the bardo of the nature of existence.

Then when one is going to sleep, the next phase that will happen is that one will begin to dream. And in the moment of dying, the moment of the dream coming, is the same as the phase that comes after the bardo of the nature of existence, which is called the bardo of existence. And the bardo of existence is the bardo which is always generally spoken of when people use the term bardo. That's what they mean.

The practitioner, who finds him- or herself in this bardo of existence, is aware of this bardo, and there are many things the practitioner can do to overcome the situation and to better the situation. Now in the bardo the practitioner is already not conditioned by a physical body. Nevertheless, all the functions of the senses are there present. Such a practitioner will have a clarity far superior than the clarity of normal human beings... [tape gap]... The state or presence of rigpa vanishes into the Dharmata. That's the condition of existence.

And what we're speaking of here is a principle of reintegration of energies. So as a result of this practice of the natural light, as it were, as the rjes thob of this practice, the post-meditation of the practice, one will already begin to develop awareness in dreams. So if one is really and truly capable of doing this practice of the natural light, one doesn't have to do any specific particular practice in order to develop awareness in the dream state.

'khrul bral means one overcomes illusion. There are two ways of looking at this overcoming of illusion. One way is through awareness of dream and sleep. So by this means, through becoming aware of the illusoriness of the dream, in one's daily life one becomes more aware of the illusory nature of what is appearing to one while one is awake.

And the other thing that also comes about is that one is no longer the slave of sleep or of dreams. Because when we got to sleep, we tend to be conditioned in our dreams by the very same factors which condition us during our daily life. And so practicing like this, the dream becomes a way of finding the true state of knowledge. And so all this becomes a way of developing the manifestation of sku and ye shes, the body and wisdom, primordial awareness. So this sums up the practice of the night.

Then we have tho rangs, the practice of the morning. What has to be done when one wakes up in the morning? When one wakes up in the morning with a presence which is neither changed nor corrected in its clarity, this represents wisdom. Because now we're re-entering into the functioning of all our senses, like a dead person who seems to be being reborn into another dimension. So one remains in simple pure presence without meditating on anything constructively or without entering into distraction, but truly present in that very condition.

guruyoga, state of rigpa

And one is in a state that cannot be conditioned by any exterior circumstance, whether it's a thought or whether it's something external. This, truly speaking, is the very state of the supreme master Samantabhadra. So the master Samantabhadra represents the true ultimate condition. Fundamentally this is also a way of doing Guruyoga, an essential Guruyoga.

Understand that this very state of rigpa is the state of the master himself. And this state of rigpa is none other than my own inherent state itself. So it's not that there are two separate things that have to be either united or merged together in any way. So we could say that is the supreme Guruyoga. With this presence, one finds oneself in this very presence.

He who finds himself in this presence, observe what it is that is there. In the moment of being present and looking, observing, one finds there's nothing that is confirmable in any way. Thus one's self-originated wisdom manifests itself as clarity. That's a very important point in the practice in general.

Here we're speaking of the moment of waking up in the morning, but that's not really the only moment that's involved. One is trying to do this at every moment. But even if one believes that one is very present in the state of rigpa, it could be that there's a kind of sleepiness there. To deal with this, it's not that you should have some kind of pre-planned idea "First I must do this. Secondly I must do that." But when I'm present in the state of rigpa, there's a state almost as if I myself was directing myself towards that state of rigpa. That doesn't involve any thinking.

But there's a way almost as if I was finding a presence. There's more clarity. This is a way you could say of refreshing one's contemplation. And this is what is famously known as the rang byung ye shes, self-originated wisdom. Another important point.

Thus non-dual wisdom arises. Arising it liberates itself of itself. Arising it liberates itself of itself. At that moment one finds oneself beyond dualistic thought, beyond the concepts of objective vision. But one remains present in this wisdom which is in no way conditioned by thought.

Then there appears the wisdom of clarity which is not conditioned by concepts of by any considerations. Then there arises the wisdom of the sensation of pleasure, bde ba, which doesn't remain at the dualistic level of subject and object. There arises the supreme wisdom which has no way of being mistaken, which has truly speaking entered into the underlying fundamental condition of all dharma or phenomena. Then there arises the supreme condition of the three bodies, which means Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya, which is the clarity of the wisdom of quantity.

When one is practicing thus both day and night, and the whole of the dimension of our life enters into contemplation, slowly slowly one's degree of capacity develops so that one is becoming familiar with this. And one's passions are what we've defined as lam slong, which means they're being brought into the path as things which are usable on the path. And so one develops a certain measure of capacity to be able to help

passions

other beings through one's three bodies, Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya.

So the degree to which one is becoming familiar with the practice can be measured by the degree of control, or mastery, one has of one's dream state. And day by day one will observe the overcoming of attachment, so that pleasant and unpleasant are no longer things which can condition one. And through all these conditions there arises wisdom. So everything that one encounters, whether it's beautiful or ugly, good or bad, becomes something which enables one to develop one's practice. One finds oneself in the condition of the Dharmata. One interrupts the continuation of illusory vision.

Thus if a practitioner of Atiyoga, the primordial yoga, finds himself in this condition and really is practicing like that, he can be called a true practitioner of Dzogchen. Such a practitioner will be unmoved from the condition of the Dharmata both day and night. Remember once again that "not moving" doesn't mean not moving physically. Rather it means that day and night one finds oneself stably in that presence.

Such a thing can be realized between two breaths. Between two breaths means two things. It means that in one's life one can realize it. It also means when we finish, end, breathing, it can be realized. This is not some words that Norbu has invented. This is the master Garab Dorje who said this.

How is it that passions can become something that can be applied on the way? All dharmas, all existence, don't remain at the level of things that can be divided up into good and bad, ugly and beautiful. They find themselves in the same condition as the Dharmata, the condition of all existence. In very many cases this is called the rochig (ro-gcig). It's not here in this text, but it means of one taste.

Kun rig means everything is present in that state. But even if they're present, there is no concept in behind them, as it were. There is recognition of the passions, such as what is called ignorance. Ignorance does not dominate the mind which finds itself in the state of mitogpa. Thus arises the true inherent condition of Dharma. Voidness and self-perfectedness both present at once in wisdom. In front of our six senses everything which presents itself is clear and at the same time, it is without its own nature. It's without self-nature. It's not an illusion. It's something which is itself the Dharmata manifesting.

Then in such a moment, recognizing the inherent nature of a passion such as anger, there arises the wisdom of clarity. Everything which one sees and appears as an external vision is none other than the nature of the Dharmata, the nature of existence, which is truly the state of rigpa internally. This itself is that which is called wisdom. Thus it's not dual and doesn't remain at the level of internal and external.

This is a manifestation which also gives rise to great bliss. One recognizes the energy of this great bliss, bde ba chen po. It's non-dual, not divided into inside and outside. Thus there arises the sensation of maha sukha, this great bliss without limits. This is all about how passions can be rendered something that can be used on the path.

Then, through the manifestation of the three bodies, what

3 bodies, 5 capacities

is the capacity of the individual to benefit other beings? Also as regards the capacity to benefit all other beings through the development of the three bodies, it's possibly very important to clear up for those of you who don't know what the three bodies are, what they are, but perhaps there isn't time now.

Because I'm just repeating Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya. Perhaps somebody is understanding nothing. They're pretty words but maybe they just remain like something up there on the shrine. They don't really hit anybody. But minimally, to give some idea, the individual has these three levels of existence, body, voice and mind. And the nature of these, the functioning of their energy, has three fundamental aspects. And when one realizes oneself, there are various ways, different levels, in which these can manifest.

And this manifestation of the three bodies is none other than the very state of the purity of wisdom, and the dimension of the body. It's the very same dimension as of the three poisons of the three passions themselves. So there are these three poisons, but now they're no longer called the three poisons, now that one has reached realization. These very same three poisons now manifest as the three bodies, which have as inherent characteristics infinite wisdoms.

And through these three bodies, whatever it is that arises, that which is defined as the body, that which is defined as wisdom, all this is none other than the dimension of the three bodies. Since there exist no longer any passions, since the cause of passions has been ended, or one has arrived beyond that, simply speaking, we've arrived at what is called nirvana.

But even if it's given this name, nirvana, the truth fundamentally is that all of the infinite qualities and quantities are possessed by the individual right from the beginning as lhundrub, which is self-perfected. Nothing has been changed. Nothing has been corrected. Now it's just simply that that which was inherent from the very beginning has appeared, just as the sun appears in the sky. That's what's meant by manifestation.

As regards this practice, in the supreme vehicle, it's said that this practice is well-adapted for those people who possess the five capacities, which is participation, the desire to hear the teachings, or faith. The second is diligence. The third is presence. The fourth is samadhi, that the practice is put into application. And the fifth is shes rab, the capacity of understanding.

As it has been said that one must have these capacities, be intelligent, set about constructing such capacity as is necessary for you which is lacking, or which is needed. If I realize that I'm lacking in one or other, I try to set about having that capacity. Thus one doesn't lose the supreme opportunity to be able to practice something like Dzogchen. This is somewhat concluding this text now.

When one does something in the Mahayana Sutra system, three sacred things are not to be missing. The intention must be there. Understanding of voidness and the illusory nature, unreal nature, mustn't be missing. Then when one comes to the end, one must have a dedication of the merit for the benefit

of other beings. And so now this is concluded in the same way.

Thus from the master Samantabhadra, Garab Dorje, the essence of his teaching, put into few words. Whatever virtue there is in having done this, it means, myself and others, we. When we say we it doesn't exclude anyone. It's both the people we have good relations with and the people we have bad relations with. It's all inclusive. Wishing that all whom we have contact with may realize the state of Samantabhadra. That is the text itself.

And then at the end there's a kind of colophon, a note which says who wrote it and when they wrote it. And now, Mr. Norbu will read this. [recitation]. So if you'd like this explained, this text for those who have desire and participation for the supreme vehicle, by which we mean the Dzogchen teaching, this is now set down in memory of Mr. Paul Anderson, who is now gone beyond our dimension, with the motive that as we are beginning a retreat here, this retreat that will take place in the Dzogchen Community of Conway, which is found on the eastern side of the place known as America, dedicated for this retreat.

It may seem strange to have this explanation of where Conway is to Americans, but it's not strange, because Tibetans will read this book. Similarly also Italians, if they read this, they won't know where Conway is. So this text has been written by the practitioner of Dzogchen known as Namkhai Norbu. This is a very Tibetan style. In the year of the water pig year, in the eighth month, the thirtieth day, which is called the day of good fortune. And that's really true, that was the day trashi nima ?? (bkra-shis nyi ma). So that's why we also want you to begin the retreat that day. On this auspicious day, this whole book was completed. It ends with the auspicious words, Conway, Sixth of October, 1983. Finito.

[morning talk]

It's better that today we don't have another book to explain. When we want to understand something about the teaching, it's best not to create a lot of confusion for ourselves. If we create a lot of problems in terms of different titles, different books, in the end we won't really get anything. Because we've been habituated by our education. Because each of us, if we haven't been raised as the child of a Tibetan peasant, have all been educated, especially in this modern world. And what you learned is to read books. Intelligence is measured by your capacity to analyze things. This is the way that we approach the teaching. There are aspects of the teaching such as study and philosophy, but there's no end to this kind of study and research. Since we already have a lot of confusion in our own life, but even if we have a lot of books and analyses that we learn, we don't apply these things in practice.

Let's give an example. We're not even talking about the case of Buddhism with its many schools. But let's take above all the Dzogchen teaching. It's said a master gives a teaching of Dzogchen. We don't know what it is that he's giving, but what people are falling for is a fancy name. They say "Oh, he's giving the teaching of the Longchen Nyingthig

special teachings

(klong-chen snying-thig)." It has a nice sound to it, even if you don't know what it's about. And everybody thinks "Oh this is very very important", and therefore everybody's interested in it.

Then tomorrow they hear that some master is giving a Dzogchen teaching called the Gongpa Zangthal (dgongs-pa zang-thal). And Gongpa Zangthal is not the Longchen Nyingthig. But it's another title with a beautiful sound. Because gongpa means primordial state. And zangthal means unobstructed like space. That is, between the master and the disciple, there are no obstacles, no obstructions. That is, there could be a direct transmission. That's even a nicer sound.

But there can be hundreds of others of this type. And so one follows along behind these kinds of forms and titles, without entering into the real meaning. In this case there's no end to teachings. But even in this type of person, if they follow just one type of teaching, that person will become conditioned by the words and the discussion in that teaching itself.

For example, there is a discussion about, an explanation of, self-liberation. For example there are the three types: the cherdrol, the shardrol, and the rangdrol. But then somewhere else you might find another one called yedrol. And then there might be other ones too. And then you think "Well, what's the difference between all these? Which one is the most secret?" And this means that the person has not entered into the meaning of the teaching. So I think it's best that you don't condition yourself so much with these different traditions and titles... [tap gap] ... say that this is a very special tradition.

But it's not true. It's not special. What it is is a teaching given by the master Jigmay Lingpa. And he was the most interesting master of recent times. But at any time there were various masters. At the time for example of Sangay Lingpa (sangs-rgyas gling-pa), everybody was practicing the termas of Sangay Lingpa. At the time of the great terma master Jorme ?? Dorje of Mindroling ??, everybody was practicing his terma, Ati Sangdrun ??. And there are hundreds of teachings of this type.

It doesn't mean that some are more profound than others or more important than others. If you understand, then they're all profound. They're all good teachings. But if you don't understand this, and you take one as the best, then what you're doing is limiting yourself. This is not a good way of approaching things. Now this is not true only of the Dzogchen teaching, but of all teachings, because they all communicate the same thing. So if you know how to direct yourself to the true meaning of the teaching, this is a great benefit for you.

Now in general, everyone has a lot of obstacles. The obstacles that we have in regard to the teachings have also existed for many centuries. But these obstacles are linked very much with our education. I was born in a particular country. That is, I couldn't have been born in all parts of Tibet at once. It was one particular place, and that place had its own type of people. Those people considered themselves followers of a particular sect, a particular aspect

education, sectarianism

of the teaching, religion. I was born in Derge in Khams, and the largest number of monasteries there belonged to the Sakyas, because the king was a Sakya. He was faithful to the Sakyas and he always did things for the Sakyas. And so a lot of Sakyapa monasteries developed.

But in another place you would find the same case with the Nyingmapas. But in another part of Derge you would find the Kagyudpa sect. And then finally there were the Gelugpas. In central Tibet, the Gelugpas were on top. So when you're born in a particular place, that place is devoted to a certain type of religious practice. And so when I was born, as a little child, I couldn't decide "Well I'm going to follow the Gelugpas." So the child is not guilty of following that tradition. The child is innocent.

It's just like in the western world. The mother and father take their child to the church for baptism. There's not only that initial contact, but then afterwards there's the whole process of education. Even if I don't have that idea, still by that education I must become sympathetic to that particular tradition.

Let's say we ask some Tibetan or other. Now we're not talking about a cultured person. We're talking about a farmer. And Tibetans usually are very faithful people and open to that faith. But there are people who, without understanding anything, are fanatics. And they say "Oh I'm a Kagyudpa" or "I'm a Nyingmapa". But if you ask them why they are such-and-such, they have nothing to say. They don't even know why. The most they could say is "My father was one of those. My family was one of those." This is the reason why these groups form, and people form these groups.

If we look at what the condition of an individual really is, the real understanding of the teaching, and what one has to do with it, is removed from this kind of thing. Because if we continue to close ourselves within this way of seeing, then we just make ourselves worse. Now we already have the limits of our dualism. So there's no point in increasing our limits by means of the teaching.

But the point of the teaching is to discover what this condition is. That is, we've had this kind of education. We've developed these kind of limits. The point is to now discover this. In the western world this kind of situation becomes even more ridiculous. Because we haven't had this kind of conditioning in Tibetan Buddhism. The Tibetans have it. If we have had this kind of conditioning, it's in the Christian condition.

But if we have begun to interest ourselves and understand a bit about Buddhism, there's no point in saying "Well I first met the Kagyudpas or the Gelugpas, and that's what I have to follow." What you have to understand in the first place, is what it is you're looking for. That is, a teaching has to function as a way to open yourself. So to open oneself means that not only is one not limited by a particular school, but one is not limited by the style of a particular teaching, by a particular text, by its particular methods of practice.

A kind of teaching like I spoke of before, the Longchen Nyingthig, or the Dzogchen Semde or Longde, whatever type,

education, sectarianism

above all teaches the condition of the state of the individual. And after one discovers what that primordial state is, they teach how to continue in that state. This is the principle of Dzogchen. And all these types of Dzogchen teachings communicate this. And if you've understood this, then you know that there's no difference between these teachings.

Now the masters use the methods of various teachings. So that if a master has had the transmission of the Longchen Nyingthig, then he communicates through that teaching. And the student understands through this method. And another teacher communicates using another method. When one enters into a knowledge of this, there's no difference. It's the same teaching.

For example, I had this education in the monastery. From when I first went into the monastery, I began to study everything they had to teach. It seemed like every day, what they were teaching was the most important thing. So today we're teaching Nagarjuna, and a master more important than him doesn't exist. And then the next day we were taught the Tantric teaching of Saraha, and that was the most important teaching. So every day there was a specific title to the teaching, and each one was given tremendous importance. Every year with my study I constructed this edifice. So I created these internal limits between these various teachings.

So when I received a Sakyapa teaching, I said "Oh here I've received a Sakyapa teaching." And it was quite clear to me that those of the Nyingmapa and the Kagyudpa were different. I made a kind of internal list, what I had received and what I hadn't received. I wanted to become a kind of treasure house of all the teachings. And people still are doing that today. I thought that I had really received the teaching. But I really didn't notice what was going on in my own consciousness.

And then finally in this state I arrived at the place of my master Changchub Dorje. He said "Always you talk very logically with your mouth and your nose is like a Madhyamika." And I thought "This is a very strange thing to say." Because I had studied these things for a long time. I thought they were very important. But it wasn't like he was putting down Madhyamika and logic. What he meant was that I had become a slave of analysis and words. Even though I knew how to say a lot of nice words, I was always at the level of mental analysis. I never penetrated to the nature of the mind.

Of course I knew how to use the term, nature of the mind, and I knew how to talk about meditation. Because I had a mind that functioned and it was always linked to words. And there were a lot of books written about the mind and about practice. And I and others knew how to read them and to repeat them. We believed that that was what the teaching was.

But what I discovered when I met this master was that this is not what the teaching is. The teaching really is something to be discovered within oneself. And when you discover this, then everything becomes linked to this understanding. It's not these well-known considerations in regard to titles and books. This is what we have to try to find out. It's not a complicated thing. It just means

impermanence, karma

starting with ourselves. As we said, it's much better to understand the real meaning of something than a hundred different words.

When the Buddha spoke about awareness, he talked about the reality of impermanence. He said "You never know whether tomorrow or your next life are going to arrive first." It's true. No one has any guarantees. So what's the point of doing a lot of complicated stuff that has no meaning. It's better to do minimally something that will have a real value. Don't fool yourself. What does it mean to fool yourself? To fool yourself means to falsify yourself. That is, you do a bunch of things which you think are so wonderful but really have nothing to them. So what we should try to do is go a little bit toward the essential meaning.

Now the essence we talked about a little bit in that book of yesterday. And we talked about this usually in terms of the mirror example. Every individual must find themselves in their primordial condition, that is, the nature of the mind. Until we find this nature of the mind, the human being is always a slave of dualism.

We always talk a lot in the teaching about cause and effect, that is, karma. That karma is extremely important in the relative situation. But it's not sufficient just to go about analyzing karma. Because that is a relative thing. But by means of the relative you know what you have to learn, where you have to arrive with that. Otherwise there's no end to karma.

Now I can cancel a karmic act, but at the same time I can be creating another karma. Because we live in our human dimension with our passions. Good and bad are parallel, and at this level doing a whole lot of good things can also create bad. So you must never forget where we want to end up, where we've got to get to. Certainly I'm not putting down this consideration of karma. This depends upon the individual's own awareness. What's most important is to understand the principle here.

Now most masters talk a lot about karma and compassion. But these are relative things. If one only talks about this, that's not correct. Let's say I want to get to Washington. On the journey, don't forget that you're trying to get to Washington. So you shouldn't only think after taking a few steps "Oh what a beautiful tree" or "This is a nice road" or "This one's not so nice", because on the way to Washington you're going to run into a lot of things and a lot of problems. If I don't know the road I might end up in the middle of a forest.

So until you arrive there, all the problems that you find are what are called karma. And when one has gone beyond karma, then there is no distance between here and Washington. So you have to understand what karma and compassion mean at the relative level. Let's say I still haven't gotten to Washington. That is, I'm here, and I have a physical body. Certainly as long as I have this physical body, I have to know what it's like, what kind of things I'm going to meet along the road. But you get in a real mess if you forget about Washington - that's where you want to get to - and think that the principal thing is the road. This is an error.

nature of the mind, transformation

So this is why it's important to understand that famous "nature of the mind". Now it's clear that we can't encompass this nature of the mind with words and physical things. But the mind can enter within our way of measuring things. And so the mind is within judgment and the relative. But through this means, we can come to understand what its nature is.

So thus we live in this relative condition. We have our body, voice and mind, and everything that we do every day, even if it has nothing to do with spiritual things, is relative to these three. But knowing this principle there's a way to guide ourselves to the essential point.

Now remember what we said yesterday. When a thought suddenly arises, this "arising suddenly" isn't something special or strange. It's just that thoughts arise. As soon as this thought arises, before entering into judgment about it, certainly in this case one can't be sleepy. One has not fainted, but one is ready to enter into judgment. But here we also have the presence. That is, the state of rigpa is also present. But after this there is the entering into judgment and its continuity.

But it doesn't mean that when judging begins, rigpa is just finished. But if one always finds oneself in the state of presence, then rigpa is always there. But we're always distracted with this judgment. And that's why we say that one is no longer in a state of contemplation. So when we do meditation and practice, it's always just a method to carry us to this level.

Now we always say that the Dzogchen teaching is a method of self-liberation. And usually it begins with doing some kind of fixation to arrive at this state of rigpa. There are also other methods of practice in which one is guided to this state with other methods, for example in the Tantric teachings. In that case we talk about the method of transformation. But it's clear that transformation is not the only principle there. But the meaning there is that once one has transformed this impure vision of ours, but at the same moment one discovers that all of this vision is not really real.

And this is a different way of approaching things from the Buddhist Sutras. What the Sutric teaching does is to remove the reality of all things to carry one to shunyata. But in the transformation practice, nothing is being removed or taken away. One is not working with the mind in order to discover what this voidness is. But in practice this unreality of things actually manifests itself. But this is a transformation. It's something different. And in this transformation, voidness and clarity are present together, non-dualistically. So when one has reintegrated one's state with this non-duality of void and clarity, that's the true Mahamudra. This means that this is a way of taking oneself to the state of rigpa, the state of presence.

But if you don't know where you're getting to in this kind of practice, and you're visualizing all kinds of fantastic deities, and you're developing all the manifestations of an infinitely large and complex mandala, it's a positive action that one is doing. It's very nice. But you're not going to arrive at the conclusion through that.

transformation, reflections

As we said before, if you're taking a trip you have to know where you're going. Many Tantric practitioners talk about the importance of visualization. And they say you have to realize the kyerim practice of transformation. That is, the practice of the kyerim is to transform the idea of realness and concreteness that we have. Through this one discovers in practice what is called the unreality of things.

But that's not the end. One also has to reintegrate this into the primordial state. So if one doesn't understand this, it's just like having discovered a whole bunch of different roots without knowing where they go to. So even if you're doing a practice of Tantrism, you have to know that you're taking yourself to the state of rigpa.

Now it's not important if the word rigpa is not used in Tantrism. In Dzogchen is where you usually find this word rigpa. Let's say you're doing a practice or a study of Anuttara tantra. You're not going to find this term rigpa. Perhaps you'll find the use of the term rigpa meaning intelligence. And also in the ordinary spoken Tibetan language rigpa means intelligence. When you see a child and you say "Oh what an intelligent child", you say "rigpa yakpo ??". Clearly you're not referring to the rigpa as talked about in Dzogchen.

Because that state has no good or bad about it. It's beyond such limits. And the masters of Dzogchen say this term rigpa refers to the state of realization, just as talking about our primordial state as the Dharmakaya. But this is really a case of people giving too much importance to terms. What's clear is that rigpa is the opposite of marigpa. Marigpa means ignorance. That is, ignorance means as if one doesn't know that what you see in the mirror are just reflections.

Let's say we have a very hot day. And you don't have anything fresh and cool to eat or drink. Let's say you see in the mirror a beautiful plate of ice cream. Now we supposedly know what a reflection is. We don't go look for the ice cream in the mirror. We look for the source of the reflection. But if you don't know what a reflection in a mirror is, then you go and look for that real thing in the mirror. So someone who doesn't know that this is a reflection is someone we call ignorant. So if you know that in one case you have a reflection of ice cream and in the other case the real ice cream, then we can talk about rigpa, knowing. That is, rigpa means that one possesses this kind of knowledge.

Now in the Dzogchen teaching, the nature of the mind and rigpa are a bit different. The term "the nature of the mind" is a kind of guide, something we can understand with reasoning, with our mind. For example if I talk about the horn of a horse, even if I've never seen such a thing, I can imagine it very well. Because I know about the horns of yaks and cows. So with my imagination, I take the horn off a cow and I put it on a horse. This is how the mind works. Because we know, concretely, how the mind works.

So we can do the same thing with the term "the nature of the mind". We think "Ah the mind must have nature." The nature of the mind is such an imaginary concept. But when this is no longer just an imaginary activity but we really

nature of the mind, void, transformation find ourselves in this state, when we find this concretely, this is what we call rigpa. That is, rigpa is a presence. It's a direct experience. And when we talk about the nature of the mind, it doesn't necessarily mean this.

So whatever kind of teaching there is, even if it doesn't use the term rigpa, this is where it's pointing. As we've said, each teaching is taught according to the capacities of the individual. And thus it's always relative to the state of our existence. For example, the Buddha was born as a human being. He spoke to the Indians in their language. This means it's a very material situation. This is why we speak of the Nirmanakaya, that is, a concrete manifestation.

And what was taught was taught according to the reasoning powers of the people, and what they could understand. It was basically based on the principle of the four noble truths. First of all he made people understand what our problems were, what our suffering is, and then, where this suffering comes from. How can we get rid of this? And what's the way to do this? This is not a complicated thing. It's real. It's concrete.

Then in terms of the path there, he also went to a higher level, and taught us the Mahayana. And he got into an explanation of shunyata or void, to make us understand that this karmic vision of ours is not real. And so, what you get to with that, the most you get to, is shunyata, void. So this void is this state of the Dharmata. This state which is called in Dzogchen, kadag, also rigpa. To get this far is pretty good. That is, this was given to people who had the capacity to understand this kind of thing.

But there also are people who have more capacity than this. And to these he communicated a teaching of transformation. That is, these people already knew what was meant by unreality. Based on this, the teaching of transformation arose. That is, if you don't understand the unreality of things, how can you transform them? It's true. In Tantrism, when they teach, they don't establish logically "This is not real. This is not real." They don't have that kind of concept... [tape gap] ... more capacity than that. That is, not only is there the void, but there's also what is called clarity.

Then in the Dzogchen teaching, one begins to understand also what is called lhundrub. This state of rigpa is not just a void state, but it also possesses its infinite qualities and capacities. Now look, Tantrism is also going toward that level. And it's going toward that level for people who are superior to normal people. But further, the Dzogchen teaching is not a teaching of transformation, but a teaching of self-liberation. And self-liberation means finding oneself with the presence of this clarity. In this case one doesn't need a method to reason, to eliminate things, or even to transform them.

Now we spoke yesterday a whole lot about this little book when it dealt with the contact with the six senses. When we talk about the six senses people might think that's a bit strange because we usually talk about five. Always in the Dzogchen teaching we talk a lot about tshogs drug, which means something like the six senses. Everybody knows the five. The

senses, ornaments, mirror

five senses have their objects, like the eye and the object of sight, that is, the object of our vision. And then we have the sounds heard by the ear, that is, all the nice, unpleasant and pleasant sounds. So we have the five senses, that is, the five sense organs and their objects.

And then we usually talk about another sense, that is, the mind. The objects of these senses is the whole of existence, that is, all that is visible, what is not visible, all that is thinkable. So it's not so strange. There are all these objects of our senses and our mind. So the practitioner finds himself in whatever place, whatever moment. You always find yourself, if you're a human being, with the functioning of these senses. When you have these, you have their objects.

So when we have this case, and we have contact between the senses and their object, this is communicated to the mind, which begins to reason. And this is how we become ordinary people, and there's nothing wrong with that. And we continue transmigrating in this way.

On the other hand, someone who finds himself in the presence of the state of rigpa, everything arises without being interrupted, without being conditioned as objects of judgment. That is, there's no concept of the object, but still, without interruption, things arise. So this is the way in which one finds oneself in the state of rigpa without interrupting our mode of vision. For this reason we spoke about the five or the six senses being like ornaments to our own state.

In the trecho teaching of Dzogchen, we talk about the way of continuing of the chogzhag of the visible. So you don't have to do any transformation, any changing, or anything like that. That is, just find things as they are within this presence. So in this case everything becomes like an ornament to the state. In this case all these objects don't become means to condition us.

And we always use the example of the mirror to try to understand this. It's a very simple example, an easy example to understand. We're saying that being in the state of rigpa is like being in the state of the capacity of the mirror. When we say that the capacity of the mirror is something clear and pure, we're not talking about this capacity as something material and relative.

And in this mirror everything is reflected, whether it's good or bad, beautiful or ugly. But beautiful and ugly result from someone who is outside looking at those reflections in a dualistic manner. But in this capacity and condition of the mirror itself, things like beautiful and ugly just don't exist. That is, then, beautiful and ugly reflections don't condition the nature of the mirror.

So the more that's reflected in this pure and clear mirror, the better it is. Because this means the mirror is working. That is, this is an inherent quality of the mirror. One who finds oneself in this state of the mirror, this capacity itself, finds nothing to condition them.

Now also we have our internal sensations. And we have the passions which arise in our mind. So there's a principle here. Let's say, we're in time. That is, we have to have a contact between sense and object. Then internally, the

passions, self-liberation

passions can arise from this. I see a beautiful flower, so there's a contact with the eye and that flower. And the mind receives a communication of this. The mind begins to function and you say "Oh what a beautiful flower." And from this, passions arise. So I go over to smell the beautiful perfume of that flower. And the smell is even more wonderful than just seeing the flower. So I already have this direct contact with this object, and I'm developing my passions here, and I can really develop my attachment. And this is how things usually work in time.

In any case, the first contact doesn't have to be with vision. It can also be just in terms of the mind. It can be all the things that we think about, and all the passions that arise internally. The same thing is happening.

But when we find ourselves in the state of rigpa, these things don't become a means to condition us. When we don't have our concept of this passion, it doesn't become a means to condition us. It's true, that in this case, one doesn't have to run away from the passions. Nor does it mean that one ought not to have them. When we have a physical body, not to have passions would be like becoming like a stone. Being like a stone and not experiencing anything is not too good a state. But the principle is not to be conditioned by the passions.

So how can we find ourselves not conditioned by these passions while they still continue to exist? As we've given in the example, as we've said, we don't find ourselves outside of the mirror looking at the reflections dualistically. But we have to find ourselves in the same condition as that state of the mirror. This means the presence of the state of rigpa within the passions themselves.

Now it's not easy to do the self-liberation of whatever passions arise. It's easy to say in words. It's also easy to understand by the example of Milarepa who sacrificed for so many years. And even if we don't have the capacity to make the sacrifices that Milarepa did, because that's a bit of a different way of looking at things, still we have to understand that it's not too easy to do this kind of self-liberation. Because we have all of our concepts, our passions, our habits, building up for a whole life. But it's not only a case of this life, but we must consider that our passions have their cause. For this reason we do practices of purification. So it's quite clear that this is not an easy thing.

But what's important to know is how to do this kind of practice and how to overcome these problems. So every day we have our thoughts. We have our contact with all things within existence. We have time, so that we should know how to do something with this. It shouldn't remain just an idea. Perhaps one has learned some really nice practice in which one visualizes a whole bunch of things, very complicated. There's a bunch of mantras to recite. And let's say that this is a practice that takes two hours. This is a really nice practice when one has the time to do it.

But in general it's kind of hard to do this. Usually we get up in a hurry in the morning and run to the bathroom. Most people are like this. Perhaps some people have time at their disposal. But just because some people have this

practice, helping oneself

particular case of having time, that's not the same for everyone. Most of us don't have a lot of time. And then, when we do have the time, we don't feel like doing that kind of thing. Usually in our work we have a whole big mess to deal with. When we have a little time, who wants to do that kind of thing? So even if we know a lot of wonderful things, we don't apply them.

Above all, we must be aware of what our condition is. It's very important to observe ourselves throughout the day, how we regulate our time. Everybody is pretty much the same in terms of this point. Now many people say "Oh I get up very early in the morning to do a tun before work." If you have a very spiritual feeling at a certain moment, then you can do that.

But if one hasn't entered into true knowledge, that kind of spiritual feeling passes. In the autumn clouds come, and there's a storm, and then suddenly it clears. In the same way, when we have these kinds of spiritual impulses, it's almost like we want to become a monk or nun. So after a few months or after a few years, this kind of thing passes, and we can't even bear saying a few prayers.

And this happens because we don't have this principle of real knowledge. So in this case, dedicating oneself to getting up early and doing an hour's worth of practice doesn't mean a thing. So this is true because this is not something we can do for our whole lives. But it's also the fact that we have twenty-four hours during the day, not just one. Isn't it a bit better to have a little more awareness of our own life and its condition? So when you're more aware, then you know what to do in order to help yourself.

Now the masters of Dzogchen always say this phrase "a practitioner always has to know how to collaborate with him- or herself, to help yourself." This is what they say. It's not that you always have to go running around asking help from someone else. Now you can do that when it's necessary, when it's really useful. But what's more important is to learn how to help yourself. But to help yourself doesn't mean that you suffocate yourself. To help oneself means to know what one's condition is and to do what's necessary.

The first thing is to know that one has to eat, and where one's going to get the money. Oh, but then people say "Oh this is not Dharma. Dharma means getting away from all that worldly stuff." And this is the kind of thing that often happens in a system, say, like Hinayana. But sometimes it doesn't correspond to what really is.

Perhaps there comes a moment of this spiritual impulse, that is, one leaves one's husband or wife and children, and escapes to India and suddenly one becomes a monk. One meets the masters there. One stays there for a few months, because one has brought enough money to do that. But then the dough runs out. But when the money runs out, one still hasn't become enlightened. There's this physical body still there. Then you know that you have to get the money to buy the rice and the dahl that you eat in India. And there's a lot of suffering in India. There are a lot of Indians who don't have anything to eat. Certainly it's not very easy to get along easily there.

laziness, suffocation

At a certain point this poor person gets fed up and returns home. When they get back, they get back to a very angry spouse who says "You cannot come in my house." And now that person doesn't have any work, and no house. Then he begins to get a bit angry at the Dharma. It's true. This kind of thing happens.

Now what does this mean? This means there's a lack of awareness. That is, you have to know what our human existence is. We have a body, voice and mind. So if I want to do a practice to help myself, I have to know what the circumstances are. If we begin with that principle, then day by day we can begin to better ourselves. Usually in Dzogchen, the advice given in regard to practice is "Don't suffocate yourself." There are certain systems of practice in which they say "You've got to struggle with your laziness."

But in the Dzogchen teaching they say this is wrong. Now it's only wrong when one has the capacity to understand what's being meant here. That is, if you don't understand what the principle of Dzogchen is here, then it does have a value to struggle with one's laziness. Let's say I don't feel like doing any practice. But I still insist in trying to do it. But if I keep this up for two or three days, I can get completely blocked. Because if I don't feel like doing it, there is a reason why things are not happening. A practice is not finished in two days. A practice has to proceed throughout the length of one's life. If one suffocates oneself, then one gets blocked.

But if you give yourself some space, then within that you can discover a way to keep moving forward. Now to give space means you do this with awareness, with presence of mind. This doesn't mean when one doesn't feel like doing practice, I just do whatever I feel like. If what one is doing is really giving oneself space to be distracted, then this "giving oneself space" doesn't have much meaning. In this case the person doesn't possess this capacity of giving oneself space. In this case it's much better to struggle with that laziness. So even if you can succeed in that struggle for one day or two days or a week, that's still better.

So you really have to understand by giving oneself room or space. This kind of thing is what we mean by knowing how to work with oneself. So the first thing, if one is a practitioner of Dzogchen, is to be aware, and aware, above all, of one's own condition. Thus collaborating with oneself every day, it's certain that slowly slowly one will better oneself. I think we can stop now.

[afternoon talk]

So we always have for practice this book of tun. We already know how to sing it. And perhaps you also know how to do the concentration that goes along with it. But I think that all the practices that are in here are already too many. Even if one knows how to do them, it's too much.

But there are some really first rate practitioners who don't even use these many practices, like my master, Changchub Dorje. I never saw him read a book this big. So this means that probably a very few words are enough. So even if there are a few words, the best thing is to know really what they mean. So then all practice becomes something simple with less confusion.

So in practice we have the Guruyoga that's really indispensable, above all in the Dzogchen teaching. The Guruyoga is the basis for understanding the whole teaching. The Guruyoga comes from the original transmission or the original introduction to the teaching. So we talk about giving an explanation of the state of rigpa just as it is, as we've explained a lot in the last few days. We explained how, in that first moment when that thought arises, to enter into the presence of that without any judgment, and that the finding oneself in that state of presence is what we call rigpa. That's just a word. And we're giving an explanation of it.

But then, some people really try to have this experience. And some people have an experience and say "Oh! maybe this is it." And then they create a confusion in regard to this "Well, maybe this isn't it. Maybe it is. I don't know." Or somebody might have had an experience before, and now they have a bunch of doubts.

So why does this happen? Because there has been an explanation with words and then the mind flows along after those words. So you have to understand that transmission doesn't only mean a transmission through words. There are also... [tape gap] ...

So when a master explains this knowledge, through these three aspects of ours, then one can enter into this knowledge and apply it. And what you apply is what you've been introduced to by the master. So to enter into this experience is what we call the Guruyoga. So one has had this experience, and then one can apply it. This is also called unifying oneself with the state of the master. So, to talk about unification with the state of the master doesn't mean like two people are becoming one. It means that one is putting into practice this state of knowledge.

So in this case we visualize a great deal the letter AH. Through this AH we unify ourselves with this primordial state. That is, through this AH we find ourselves in the state of rigpa, that state of pure presence. This is the very same state which has been introduced by the master, the introduction to the state of knowledge.

Why do we use this letter AH that we visualize? There's a very important principle here. Let's take the case of that aspect of our existence, the mind. One can't know this mind directly by touching it, by feeling it. Then we have that aspect which we call the voice, which is our energies. This

guruyoga, OM AH HUM

we can get some kind of handle on through what we call vibration, as in the case of our voice which we can hear through the ears. Then we get to the material level of the body. And here is something we have direct contact with through touching and seeing. This is how our existence is.

So when we talk about transmitting this primordial knowledge, it's not only beyond the body and voice, but also the mind. Now certainly it's a bit closer to the mind. But our mind, just our relative mind, is something difficult to grasp. But we can also have this state present through voice, energy. And also it can be represented on the material level through this letter AH, which represents the level of the voice. Thus the voice is linked to its energy. So this level of the voice, this level of energies, is a way to integrate the level of the body with that of the mind. In this way we use letters that we visualize.

Thus the use of visualizing these letters is a fundamental way to integrate body, voice, mind. Many times we do the Guruyoga just by sounding and having the presence of this letter. But when we elaborate this practice, then the mind begins to function more, that is, the mind begins to visualize something. To visualize means to create something with the mind. So thus we have a Guruyoga in which our mind is working a bit more. So we can enlarge upon this very simple Guruyoga with just the letter, but it's not as complicated as the kind of Guruyoga that's usually done.

So on the first page of our Tun book we have this letter AH. In this case, the letter AH appears suddenly, and we find ourselves in the state of rigpa. That is, this is in the presence of the state of rigpa which has been transmitted by the master. This is a Guruyoga.

Then on the third page, we have OM AH HUM repeated three times. These three are symbols of body, voice, mind. In Tibetan they usually speak of body, voice and mind simply as the three gates. And this is the case for an ordinary person. One speaks of these three gates. So you understand that "body" means the material body, and the "voice" means that voice which is linked to our bodily energy. The "mind" means that which thinks and reasons.

Then we can represent these three in another way, not by three gates, but by OM AH HUM. So in this case we speak of the three vajras. Three vajras, three gates, these are quite different. In Tibetan this distinction can be easily made, because they have an honorific language. However in our western languages we don't have these honorific terms, so body is body, voice is voice, and mind is mind. The best that we can do to indicate this is give a capital letter to the honorific category.

But the important thing to understand is there's a different meaning involved. So when we talk about the three vajras, we mean the fundamental primordial state of these three, not, for example, the concrete physical body. Another way of talking about this is the pure state of these three, in which state we talk about Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya. So in general this is what the OM AH HUM represents, the three vajras.

These three vajras don't refer to just a single

OM AH HUM, illusion

individual, but it's a very general term. But one speaks of the three vajras of all illuminated beings. If I do a visualization of these three, OM AH HUM, so then the representation of these three, OM AH HUM, represents the pure state of body, voice, and mind. And so in this case the sound represents the primordial dimension of everything. And then when we talk about the mind, it represents the primordial state of the mind. So then we also use these three, OM AH HUM, in the Guruyoga.

If you want to work a bit more with visualization, then when you're sounding the OM AH HUM, you can visualize these three as representing the body, speech and mind of all the masters, or use the form of your own master. Then what you can do is have the unification of the body, speech and mind of all the masters into the places on the one master you're visualizing, unified into those three places. So those are the first two recitations of OM AH HUM. And with the third, all of this is integrated into oneself. In this way, with these few words, one begins with a dualistic visualization and then unifies.

Now many people might think "Well why should I do a dualistic practice at all? This dualistic stuff is not so important. We've already got enough dualism. Why should we do this?" That's the reason you have to use this. So we already have this dualistic mode of vision. We have to realize this, and we have to make use of this to carry us beyond that dualism.

Let's take an example. Let's say there's a practitioner who knows fairly well how to do contemplation. Every once in a while he gets caught up in distraction. But he sometimes has a real presence of mind. When there is this presence he thinks "I want to do a bit of practice. I don't want to remain distracted." That's a thought. That means you're on the level of mind. From that thought arising one can find oneself in the state of presence. That is, we've taken off from the level of the mind, but we've gone to rigpa. This is a tiny little example.

But we have on a larger scale, our gigantic level of relative concerns. We can say everything is like an illusion. And we can really be convinced of this illusoriness. But even if we have this conviction, we still find problems just the same. And also this illusoriness can itself become a problem. If you don't eat for ten days, you'll feel awfully hungry. You can think "Well food is only illusory. It's not useful." But if we don't have a realization at this concrete level, and if we don't eat, we'll feel hungry. And why do we feel hungry? Because we have these very strong karmic traces.

We say first, everything was water. So all of our actions and all of our passions and all of this was like water, a very watery quality. Then working with this, and developing our attachments, it freezes, and becomes like ice. Then continuing for many centuries, the ice hardens and hardens, and becomes like crystal, like the glaciers on Mt. Everest. At this point it's not very easy to say that that piece of crystal is just water.

Now one knows conceptually that an extremely hard piece of ice is water. This is the kind of level of our

examples, ice, crystal, mirror

understanding of the illusoriness of things. But if I take that piece of ice and hit somebody over the head with it, it can kill them. Because it's really not water any more. If I dump a pail of water on someone, no one is going to die. So we have to eat. It's not enough just to know that that food is illusory.

So it's not enough to have an abstract knowledge of these things, but slowly we have to enter into a real knowledge of them. So we usually speak about first having a theoretical knowledge, and then a practical one. And that's how it works in regard to the transmission of the teachings. So the master has tried to make an explanation through words, but these at first remain only in words.

But once we find ourselves in this state of knowledge, then slowly slowly our ice-like condition can return to that of water. So for water to turn to ice is maybe not too difficult, but for our condition to dissolve and return to water, that's not too easy. It seems like a good example, but it really doesn't correspond in every way. We always say in Dzogchen that this state of knowledge is beyond all examples. It's important to understand this.

When we give an oral explanation, we use a lot of examples to try to give you an idea, like the example of the mirror. So at least one gets a little idea from this. "Ah, this is the reflection. This is the state of the mirror. This is the relation between the two." And one gets a little idea of what is meant by the mind and the nature of the mind. But this doesn't really correspond to the way it actually is. Because every example is partial.

For example, there are many such examples of the state of knowledge in the song of the vajra. When we talk about surya, chandra, etc., this means like sun, like moon, like a jewel. And this means that part of the example corresponds to this state, but not everything.

For example, when we talk about how energy manifests itself, when we talk about the energy called tsal, we usually use the example of a crystal placed in the sun. Then rays of light come forth from that crystal, and we say "Look, this crystal is like the primordial state of our consciousness. And the manifestation of this state, its self-perfectedness, its lhundrub, is like the manifestation of the various colors from the crystal. This is what we mean by the manifestation of tsal."

But when we want to talk about the energy called rolpa, we've got to change because this example of the crystal doesn't work. We say "Ah, in this case we'll use the example of the mirror. That mirror reflects everything which appears in it. And this illustrates the way in which things manifest internally, not externally."

If I have a round mirror, about that large, it can't manifest a reflection larger than its surface. That is, the reflections occur inside the dimension of the mirror. But if I place the crystal here in the sun, the rays manifest outside. These are two conditions, two ways of manifesting, which are different. So we have to use two different examples. But in the case of rolpa, this state of the mirror is the state of our consciousness. And the same thing, that

examples, transmission, initiation
 tsal example with the crystal is also the state of rigpa.

But then sometimes we have to explain the energy called dang (sdangs). Then we have to make use of another example, even if it's still a way in which the energy of rigpa manifests. We use the example here of a crystal ball. And we place this crystal ball on a piece of multi-colored cloth. If I take a look at that crystal ball now, what I see in it are the various colors of the cloth. But if I look from another angle, the colors are a bit different, because it's a multi-colored cloth. This is not like a reflection in a mirror, but it's something that I see from my particular position. This is another example. And once again this glass or this crystal represents my primordial state.

So we have to use all these examples. All of them are partial illustrations. There has never existed an illustration which corresponds totally to the total. Therefore we say "beyond all examples". Also we say "beyond all words". Because words you can speak as much as you want. We can make all kinds of definitions, kadag, lhundrub, etc. Because these are just to give us an idea so that we can then enter into the experience.

If I say "Okay, try to observe the first thought that arises", that's a statement in words. Nothing happens just with the words. But if I follow this and I make an experiment, then I can have an experience for myself. And therefore we say that the experience does not enter into the realm of words. And also we say it can't enter into the measurement of our thoughts. There's not a lot to think about in this case.

We have all of these very limited concepts in our mind. If we say it's a square, it's no longer a triangle. If we say it's small, then it's not large. If it's white, then it's not black. This is our limited condition. If we have to go beyond this, there's no way to do it. And therefore this doesn't enter into our thoughts. Therefore it comes to us to try to have this symbolic and direct transmission. The master explains through many many different oral explanations and gives a lot of ideas, and also teaches with many different symbols, like that of the mirror.

And then when you've understood this, then we make a kind of experiment together. In this case we talk about the direct transmission. You also have to remember this in the case of these famous initiations that teachers give. You know that the principle of an initiation is not just saying a couple of words and touching you on the head with something. Some people might get a few vibes off of that and think "Oh, everything's fine. I've gotten that." But nothing is really changed in that case.

But the initiation really works when one has understood what one has to do with that initiation. For example he says "Okay you visualize in this way." Let's give a very simple example, a very simple example, because usually in the way of transformation, the way of Tantrism, the visualizations of mandalas, etc., are very complicated. This kind of practice is already difficult for someone who's quite knowledgeable in it. But for someone who doesn't know anything, it's very complicated.

direct transmission, state of rigpa

So more simply, a master will say "At the center of your body, visualize the letter AH. You should recognize this as the unified state of all the masters who transmit this state of consciousness." At the same moment when the individual is doing this, the master works to give his direct transmission. Then if the master knows, he'll use certain words, perhaps certain mantras. And that disciple knows how to follow precisely what the master is saying. So then in this case, there can be some awakening of that person, and this means that the initiation, the transmission, is functioning. But if this is not the thing that's happening in the initiation, then all it is is a kind of blessing.

So in all types of teachings, what's important is the transmission. This transmission doesn't always have to be a ceremonial thing, like the vase initiation, for example. Above all it's in the Yoga tantras where this kind of ritual initiation is used. But there are also many teachings like Dzogchen. We don't find in the histories any description of how Garab Dorje placed a vase on the head of Shrisingha, for example. That is, the transmission didn't remain just on the level of pots and vases. But what's transmitted is a knowledge that awakens the individual. And to do a Guruyoga is to make use of that transmission. So it doesn't matter whether there is a ceremonial practice or not.

Now we're also not saying that you shouldn't make a ritual of it. If you know what the function of ritual is, then you can use that very well. Now we know that there are very many teachings in the Dzogchen Upadesha, like the Nyingthig Yazhi. That is, these are the more recent teachings of the Upadesha, and we know in these that they have approached gradually Tantric practice. But if we look at the time in which Vairocana and Padmasambhava were in Tibet, and we see the way in which from that time until recent time the Dzogchen teaching has developed, the way in which it has developed is in the direction of this nearness to Tantric practice.

So now in more recent times, when a teacher is asked to give a teaching of Dzogchen, the first thing they do is give an initiation. But what happens here usually is not a transmission, an initiation, in order to transmit this awakening of the individual. But what is presented is a ritual practice of Tantrism. I think it's real important that you understand this.

So we're always talking about giving these explanations of the state of rigpa. And when these things are explained, it's not as if it's considered the essence of Dzogchen which is being explained. So many people here are teaching about rigpa in this way, and I know this has happened to a lot of people. So you have to understand, so that one can understand completely these three transmissions, the oral transmission, the symbolic transmission, the direct transmission, through the practice of the song of the vajra, for example.

Now for example, someone who knows how to practice, that is, knows what is meant by contemplation, that is, how to find oneself in the state of rigpa, while you're doing the song of the vajra, you find yourself continually in the state of rigpa. What you're doing then with the sound is integrating

Padmasambhava, guruyoga into one's state, body, voice, and mind. The same thing is happening when they do this rigpay tsalwang (??), in which one is using some words to transmit the state of rigpa.

So it doesn't mean that someone who doesn't know anything about this teaching, and they see the song of the vajra, and they read it, and they try it out. That's not a transmission. But one has to have the transmission and the understanding. Then one tries, and then one enters into this knowledge. This is what we mean by transmission. So this kind of transmission you can use with the letter OM, with the letter AH, with three vajras, the song of the vajra. So this is a way of practicing.

Then we have a more elaborate practice like the kind we usually do in the evenings. In there we have the Guruyoga done visualizing Padmasambhava. Usually when people do a practice of Guruyoga with Padmasambhava, they think "Oh, we're doing this because we're Nyingmapa." Because people usually say Padmasambhava is the source, the father, of the Nyingmapa school. And other schools do the same thing with other figures. A Gelugpa will always try to put in first place the figure of Tsong khapa. A Kagyudpa must put Marpa and Milarepa at the head or else he's no longer a Kagyudpa. In the same way the Sakyas have their figure. So when many people do the Guruyoga with Padmasambhava they think along those lines.

But in Dzogchen this is not how it is. The case here is simply that Padmasambhava was the first master to introduce Dzogchen into Tibet. And also because he's an extremely important master in the lineage of the Dzogchen Upadesha teaching. And then we also have this principle in the Dzogchen teaching known as the body of light. At the highest level of this, we have what's called the great transfer... [tape gap] ... who has not manifested death at all. And Padmasambhava was one of the principal individuals who manifested in this way. Since we, practicing Dzogchen, are interested in this kind of thing, we use the figure of Padmasambhava.

But we're not praying to Padmasambhava. Many people think when they're doing a Guruyoga that they're praying to Padmasambhava because "I'm just a poor creature. I don't know anything. I'm so ignorant." You can do a Guruyoga in this way. But it doesn't work too well. This is more the style of Kriyatantra. In that case what one is doing is making a preparation to receive wisdom eventually.

And this is the kind of thing the Christians know how to do. It's the same. Just outside of Naples there's this church with this famous Madonna. All kinds of people with various problems make a great sacrifice in order to take a little pilgrimage to this place to ask for the Madonna's grace. They say the Ave Maria for a long time, and they make many offerings of candles, etc. Then they go back home. And maybe they find some good things or even some miracles. And why are there miracles? Because they participate with their faith. And in this way they are constructing the possibility of receiving divine wisdom.

And you can pray to Guru Rinpoche in the same way. "Help me, help me. I have so many problems." You can do this not only to Guru Rinpoche, but to Tara or some other divinity. If

guruyoga, human master

I make ten different preparations for wisdom from ten different deities, I can get ten different kinds. If I do even more I get even more. This is what we call preparing to receive wisdom.

But here we're not doing such a passive Guruyoga. We're not asking anything. What we're doing is we're trying to realize ourselves in that very same state that's represented by Padmasambhava. And that primordial state of Padmasambhava is not different from the state transmitted by my own master. And if I have a reawakening, that knowledge comes through my master. What that Padmasambhava represents is the union of the transmission of all the masters. This is what you have to understand when you're doing a Guruyoga.

So it's not that I'm making a prayer to Padmasambhava. Padmasambhava is in the center because that's where the transmission is coming from. But what's important is to know that the transmissions come from the masters themselves. So let's take the example of Buddha who was so full of wisdom. But in this case the wisdom, the knowledge, that I get, doesn't come from Buddha. It comes from my master.

Even if the sun is so great, so powerful, if I have to make a fire here on earth, then I need a lens. In this case that lens that I use to focus is much more important than the sun itself. So that's why we have this recognition that the master is the important factor in the transmission. But one might think "This human master is not so important. I prefer a figure like Padmasambhava."

But that's like one has disconnected oneself. It's like one is in the middle of the street going about calling for "My friend, the king of the country." It's very unlikely that the king is going to come walking along to help that poor person. But Padmasambhava is not like a king who doesn't have any concern for his people. Certainly these illuminated beings have a lot of compassion. But everything depends not on the master's compassion but on the capacity of the individual to receive it.

Now we know the sun rises in the sky, and it always has an infinite number of light rays coming out. But the places that receive that sunlight are the ones that are facing toward the sun. There are some north-facing caves which never receive the sun's rays. It's not the defect of the sun that there are no rays in the cave. The fault is with the condition of the cave. So one shouldn't proceed with a lot of imagination, but should work concretely with the transmission.

Now in the Tantric teaching and above all in Dzogchen, we talk about realization within this life. And they say they have so many important methods to produce a very quick realization. The secret here is the fact that there is this transmission. Otherwise, what difference is it from other Buddhist teachings? So you have to understand this, and more important, you have to know how to work with it. Therefore it's very important to do Guruyoga.

But then you do the Guruyoga according to what possibility you have for doing it. Let's say you're doing a retreat. You don't have anything else to do except practice. In that case let's say you do a Guruyoga just with the letter AH, and you're finished, and then after that you don't know

guruyoga figure

what to do. In this case you can train yourself for a long time in a Guruyoga with a lot of visualization. In this case one can work with visualization and utilize our energies and work on transformation practice. Therefore in here we have this kind of Guruyoga with many different words and visualizations.

Now you've understood why we use the figure of Padmasambhava in the transmission visualization. We can also use the figure of Garab Dorje on the twenty-fifth page. You can also use Vajrasattva. In that case it's in the Sambhogakaya style. And you can also use Samantabhadra. That's the Dharmakaya style. So there's really no limits to the forms one can use. If you really want to be a practitioner of Dzogchen, don't go limiting yourself with external considerations.

I'll give an example. Let's say you've felt you've gotten an important teaching from a Gelugpa master. Now it's very rare that a Gelugpa master is also a master of Dzogchen. There have been some who were both of these, but they couldn't present themselves officially. Let's say I'm a practitioner who got a benefit from whatever master, or let's say I got a teaching of the Gelugpas, the Lamrim teaching, and this helped me a lot.

If I feel like doing a Guruyoga with Tsong khapa, this goes perfectly well with the Dzogchen teaching, even if Tsong khapa himself was not a Dzogchen master. If I have this consideration that Tsong khapa was a realized master, this means that he found himself in this state. But if I don't have the consideration that he was a totally realized being, certainly no one could constrain me to do that kind of practice. So there's no contradiction here.

Don't create problems for yourself. What usually people do is, instead of practicing, they jabber a lot. They usually say "Oh, I do this kind of Guruyoga. What kind do you do? What kind are they doing?" But of what interest is it, what some other person does, somebody's Guruyoga practice? What's important is to try to realize oneself by doing one's best. This way of going about things is of no use at all. So whatever type of Guruyoga you've learned, you can use it perfectly well.

But when we're using this Guruyoga here of Padmasambhava, we have an invocation. This is the famous seven verse invocation. And this is always considered to be the words of Padmasambhava himself. Usually when we say this, that is, when we invoke Padmasambhava with these words, we consider that he represents the unity of all masters. Certainly Padmasambhava doesn't really care whether you pray to him or not. And he certainly doesn't care whether you're praying to him or to Buddha or some other saint or not, because he's beyond such limitations.

But we practice in our own interest, not that of Padmasambhava. In this case what we have to understand is that we should try to do our best. In which way will I benefit the most? Certainly when we do some business in the city, we sell things in such a way as to earn as much money as we can. It's very rare or very difficult to find someone who just does a business to be very elegant or just to please the

unified transmissions, promises, yetis people he's selling to. We practice in the same way, in our interest, to realize ourselves. We should look well to see what's the best method for us to realize ourselves.

So therefore we want to try to unify all the transmissions. In this case we gain a lot. Why? Because we have a lot of transmissions we've gotten. Especially in the western world nowadays with a lot of people interested in the dharma. Even if they don't understand much, if they hear there's a master around, they always go there. They don't even know anything about the teaching that he's giving. But they say "It's a teaching. It's good for me." This is a way of being without limits [laughter].

But many things are not understood in this case. But many teachers don't teach the way I do, always giving a lot of talks. Many masters just give an initiation, something very concrete and limited, defined in that way. So even if you haven't understood very much, you make an awful lot of promises [laughter]. After a certain time you become like a big bag full of promises. But you don't act on these promises, because you haven't even understood what you're supposed to do.

Now if you've made all these promises and not done anything about them, in the realm of ethics and morals, this means a person is not worth much. In terms of the teaching, we don't look down upon a certain person, but we say that this is liable to create obstacles. Even if I have dedicated myself very well to a certain practice based on this transmission, and I limit myself to that very strictly, and I act in such a way to put down all the other ones and neglect them, then you're like the Tibetan yeti who likes to take the marmots out of their holes.

These yetis go through a lot of trouble to get into a marmot hole. This is an example of dedicating oneself to doing a practice. Then at a certain point you're actually able to get the marmot. And then the yetis are very big, and with great sacrifice they squeeze themselves in and out of this hole. When they get the marmot out finally, they give it a slap. Then they sit on it. And they look around to see if anybody will come and bother them. If there's nobody coming, then they'll once again go into the marmot hole, and they'll grab another marmot. But they forget about the other marmot, and if it's not dead, it runs away. And thus they grab the second marmot. Then they do the same thing. They take the third, the fourth, and the fifth marmot. But they have no clarity there. they don't know what's going to be the last marmot. They always think There is going to be another one. Then finally in the end, when they don't find the last one, they don't have any marmots at all.

It's true. People practice in this way. So in the same way one shouldn't look down upon any teaching, any transmission. In the same way, don't become overly preoccupied with all the teachings you've received. In this case what's important is to know how to maintain all the transmissions. If you take a limited approach in regard to this, there's no way to maintain each transmission one by one.

It's true. Many people say usually "Well what am I going

unifying transmissions, master-disciple relationship to do? I went to this master and he said I have to do this practice this way." One master said "Oh you shouldn't follow other teachings. You just do this one. That's what the master taught." This is one among many masters who teach. But I can receive all kinds because I'm a slave of no master. What I'm doing is trying my best. And what I'm trying to do is awaken myself and know how to make use of everything the masters have taught.

So the only way you can accomplish this is to know how to use the Guruyoga to unify all transmissions. So the fundamental thing is for your own sake, not to create conflict. Don't think when you're doing the Guruyoga that the masters might create some kind of trouble for you. Don't think "Because I'm unifying the masters, it's as if they're going to have an auto accident" or something like that. "The Gelugpa master and the Nyingmapa master, I'm putting them together in the Guruyoga and they have a car crash."

Because in the Guruyoga what's happening is maintaining the transmission which is going to awaken us. Because in this case of the Guruyoga, the state of the masters is all the same, at the same level. And oneself has to have this level of pure vision. So if one has a problem here, it's not the fault of the masters. It's one's own. One is creating a problem for oneself.

There's a saying among the Drugpa Kagyud (??) masters, that if the disciple looks upon the master as fully awakened, then that disciple will also become fully awakened. And if they consider their teacher a little less awakened, then they'll receive the same. If they consider their master at the level of a pig, then that's the realization they'll get.

What does this mean? It means that things don't depend upon the master. And certainly the teacher has given the transmission of this knowledge. But the individual has to have the pure vision in order to continue and maintain this transmission. So it's very important you do the Guruyoga to have this kind of unified state in which there is this pure vision.

Now however some masters use this kind of talk in another way. There's a saying that goes "Whatever the master does, you should look upon it as something good, a positive action." This is a method to enslave the disciple. But one should understand that this is not what is meant by the traditional statement. And that the master-disciple relation shouldn't become like a general and his soldiers. A master is like a friend. That is, a master cooperates with his disciples in order to help them realize themselves. A master is not a general. He's not the master of an individual, the owner.

In this case, what is it that the master does? The disciple also works with the master in order to achieve his interest, which is realization. And if this is not done, then even if you consider the master such a great master, then there's not going to be much result. So you have to know what's really meant by the master-disciple relationship, and how to maintain the transmission that's occurring here.

Now sometimes people find a problem between master and disciple. It's not the case that it's the master himself that

guruyoga, AH

can awaken oneself from this kind of condition. So if there has been a reawakening in this relationship, then this kind of problem can't arise. But if there has been a relationship in which teachings have been received in a superficial way, then afterwards there can arise certain problems. In this case, the disciple doesn't know what to do, how they should behave.

A disciple always has to be aware, whether they're dealing with a master or not. But in this case it's much better to let the situation be, rather than to go about criticizing people. If you've accepted a teaching at a certain point, you should remember that. And then if at a certain point you feel things are not going well, just drop it. Leave it.

But in your Guruyoga, without any limits, if you've had that transmission, you can include it. So in this case, if you're doing this Guruyoga, with unifying all the masters, and you think of that one who you had some problems with, and that creates difficulties, then the Guruyoga is not working. Because the point of a Guruyoga is to go beyond such limitations. So in this case, you've got to do the Guruyoga even more.

Sometimes my master at the college told me when I asked him "Why does Yamantaka have such an ugly bull's head?" Because this is supposed to be a manifestation of total illumination. "You know why? Because you think it's ugly. It's useful that he has this face, because you have this kind of limitation." I think this was a very precise way of talking. So in the case of a Guruyoga, when you have something uncomfortable, you have to unify that. And things become simpler and we become real practitioners. Now we're finished.

[morning talk]

So let's talk a little more about what we were talking about yesterday, that is, practice in connection with this book. Whatever practice that we do, we begin with the letter AH. Even when we do shinay, we fix it first on the letter AH. And whenever we do a visualization in Dzogchen, we almost always use a white AH. And then when we go to sleep, we also try to visualize that white AH, either on our forehead or at the center of our body. And then in the morning perhaps we're able to awaken with this presence of the AH right there, or at least then we try to remember and have that presence again with the AH. Also when we do a tun, we start with the visualization of the AH, which in effect calls forth the state of presence.

We live in the relative condition, that is, surrounded by our impure vision. Also this kind of vision, and even material things, is represented by the color white. In a sense, this white means light. In another sense, it's a symbol of the material. Remember when we visualize the OM AH HUM, the OM is always white. And that OM is like the symbol of the essence of the body. When we say "body" here, what we mean is the whole material dimension. So the visualization of this white AH is a way in which to reintegrate our impure vision into our primordial state of energy. So we visualize it, and at the same time, we make the sound of the AH.

refuge tree, Sambhogakaya

Now if we're talking about a practice in which visualization is required, in the Anuttara tantras, whether it be in Mahayoga or Anuyoga, they talk about the visualization arising like a fish jumping out of the sea. That is, one is in a calm state, or the state of rigpa, and it's as if the visualization, the manifestation of the state, jumps forth. And one begins to work a little bit in the level of mind. So in the same way, when we're in a state of contemplation, and we begin to visualize and sound the AH, it's like that.

But we can also be in our relative condition in a state of distraction, and we recall our primordial state with this AH. And thus we do a Guruyoga in order to recall this state, and enter into the famous practice of the trecho. So you see there are many ways to use this AH, each with a different function.

So in our little book, we have first the simple practice of the letter AH. Its purpose is to carry us into the presence of our primordial state. However when we're doing a tun in which there's a bunch of visualization and mantra, there we first sound the AH, then we go into the Namoguru Bey, etc. In this case, the sounding of the AH is linked to the visualization of that well-known refuge tree.

However in the Dzogchen teaching, it's very difficult to find a detailed visualization of a particular refuge tree, if you're a really serious Dzogchen practitioner. Because the principle here is to have that presence of, as we say, the ocean of all realized beings, and not a limited concept of a lineage. [tape gap] ... In that case I'm doing something relative. So I need to make some kind of a statement to those to whom I'm performing this practice. So if I'm making some promise, like the Bodhicitta, then I have to say "Well I'm making these promises to someone." You need to have the presence of Guru, deva, dakini, all of them. Hayagriva, Vajrakilaya is no different.

So when we take refuge, we have this presence of Guru, deva, dakini, to whom we're paying homage while re sounding the AH. But we don't make it a very dualistic concept where we first call for the beings to come. But in this Anuyoga teaching, the visualization is based on the principle of self-perfectedness, lhundrub. So the visualization is just a manifesting of the essential qualities of the Sambhogakaya, which are always there.

Always we say that a realized being manifested the state of the Sambhogakaya. It's not like viewing a motion picture. It's not like a film in which you start it up, and then it goes on until you come to the end. But for us, since we are in this limited condition, there is a beginning, and there also is an end.

So we'll give a very poor example, but I hope it'll give you an idea. We're inside a house. So it's limited in the sense that there are doors and there are windows which block our exit. But outside we could say it's the realm of the Sambhogakaya where there are no limitations of going out only through doors. So when I open that window just a little bit, I can see that dimension beyond. Then the window is quickly closed again. So in this case you can say that that manifestation of the Sambhogakaya began and ended. So what

Sambhogakaya, guru

was actually seen was a manifestation of the Sambhogakaya itself. It wasn't like being shown a film.

So when one finds oneself in this dimension, then there is the continual manifestation of what we call Guru, deva, dakini. And this is why we talk about an aspect of the state being without interruption. And we use almost eternalistic kind of talk when we talk about the dimension of Sambhogakaya. However it creates a problem if we really think that it's eternalistic. But what we mean is that it's beyond time, which means it's not something that can be blocked, or finished, or stopped.

What we mean here is that when we sound the AH, we enter into this presence, this state of rigpa, and it has its capacities manifesting there, the lhundrub. I can't become a kind of customs checkpoint, check the passports of which realized beings can enter into this manifestation or not. This is what we mean when we say you can't limit what the refuge tree is going to look like. So when we have Guru, deva, dakini, we make the sound of the AH. They're all present.

You know very well that Guru means master, and the masters begin with your own individual master. What we mean by this is the master who gave you the transmission which first woke you up. That's what they usually call the root guru. This doesn't mean that this is the master with whom you have an exclusive relationship. What it means is that this was the master who was able to wake you up, and that's automatically called the root master. Then once that has happened, all the other teachings that you've had enter onto the same level and become something very positive.

There are various names given to the kinds of relations with teachers you can have, chung pa'i lama (??), etc. For example, there can be the case where you read the book of a master with whom you've never had any actual contact, but this has been a great help to your state of knowledge. And in that case you can say "That is a master of mine". Usually we think a master is someone with whom you've had direct contact. He gives you initiation. You see him before your eyes. But it's not always like this.

Let's take the case of the famous master Drubthob Ogyanpa (??), then another one, Chungdo Naljorpa (??). I've read the biographies of these masters in which it is said that they had many many disciples with whom the only contact they had was through letters. And that these disciples were able to realize themselves perfectly just through this literary correspondence. This means they didn't meet personally. And it didn't mean that the master sent them a vase in the mail so that they could have the vase initiation.

So just remember that when we talk about root guru we mean the master who first woke that person up. And then this is all relative to all the masters of the lineage. In the case of any teaching that I've had, there's always the lineage going right back to its origin. These come under this term Guru. So in this case we can say that there can be an ocean of Gurus that are present for that practitioner. One can have a very clear presence of all these masters, whether they've had direct or indirect contact with them.

Sambhogakaya, tantrism

And then we have what's called deva. Usually we consider these devas some kind of divinity. We also speak of divinities in the Yoga tantra or the Kriyatantra for example. But principally in Tantrism when we talk about devas, these are the manifestations of the Sambhogakaya. That is, the contact with the Sambhogakaya, whether we have Kalachakra or Khorlo Dehog ??, or something like this. And then we make an analysis of this Sambhogakaya realm in terms of four or six gradations of Tantras. Within this there are hundreds and thousands of different divinities that manifest.

But the distinguishing feature of the Anuttara tantra is this special method, that is, the individual has their energy. In this case, we have the individual's energy functioning and manifesting itself as a divinity. You should remember that when we talk about the five Dhyani Buddhas for example, we always say that the five Dhyani Buddhas manifest through our five aggregates, or skandhas.

Then the sempa ?? and semma ??, that is, the masculine and feminine Bodhisattvas, manifests from the functioning of our senses and the objects of our senses. So from this kind of thing you can understand that it's the functioning of our own energy that manifests as these divinities. So you have to remember that above all, Tantrism has to do with this functioning or aspect of the individual that we call our energy.

So you always must keep in mind, when we analyze the teachings, we have the way of Sutras, that is, the way of renunciation, the way of the Tantras, the way of transformation, and the way of self-liberation. As we said the other day, in the Sutric teaching, here was the Buddha, manifesting in a material realm, having direct contact with people on that level, very concrete. That is, we have here the manifestation mostly on the level of the body, the material.

However Tantrism represents a teaching on the level of the energies of the individual, that is, an energy which moves, which manifests. You don't see this kind of energy like you see a physical body. Thus the Buddha didn't teach this Anuttara tantra publicly. Thus they say this Tantrism was brought from other dimensions. So for instance they talk about these Mahasiddhas who were first scholars, and then they got a bit strange, and they took off on a journey towards the mysterious Oddiyana. Maybe they actually got to Oddiyana. Maybe they didn't. But they did find, discover, this teaching of Tantrism. So this was a way in which a lot of the Tantric teaching was brought about.

The point is to understand that Tantrism is based on our energy. This is the reason why in Tantric practice you use a lot of mantra, that is, making use of sound. That's why we sound these letters. It's quite clear that this is characteristic of Tantrism. Now there are many sort of embodied kinds of visualizations in Tantrism, like that of the kyerim. When you do a lot of complicated visualization and a lot of mantras in the kyerim, if you observe well, what's the basis? What is the origin? How is this created? It comes from the form of these seed syllables. And that's enlarged and enlarged as much as possible. And it's enlarged through

syllables, mantras

this until everything is transformed into that dimension. Then at a certain point this is authenticated with the sound of mantra. That is, our impure vision has been transformed into a pure vision, and there is this concrete reintegration that's happened.

However we don't just stay at this level of transformation. But then we find ourselves again within the form of these syllables, that is, in what we call the final state or the dzogrim. What's happening in this dzogrim? We have the presence of the channels and the chakras, but above all what we're concentrating on are these letters that are contained at the principal points here. In the dzogrim the visualization of the channels and the chakras are not the fundamentals. They're the relative aspects.

But what's important is where one is concentrating on these points of energy where the letters are. And this integration process takes place also with the sounding of the mantra. And so here what happens is the whole physical dimension of our energy, the dimension of sound, with the mantra, the dimension of mind with the concentration, are all unified into these syllables. This is a characteristic of Tantrism that should be noted.

There are many types of real genuine mantras. In this case, when they made a translation of these, they can be translated from the Sanskrit right into Tibetan. However there are also real mantras which aren't able to be translated. Then when we're actually practicing these mantras, many of these mantras are what we call the natural sound of existence. That is, with the presentation of this manifestation, this sound is also present.

But other types of chanting that we do in order to visualize or to make an invocation, they're just like descriptions of the manifestation. This kind of description is made after the initial manifestation of the Sambhogakaya, when there's the transmission made to people.

Now the way Tibetans actually practice this kind of transformation practice is with a lot of words. If one person talks about doing a practice of Kalachakra, the first thing they have to do is take two or three days just to prepare the mandala. Then they have to recite a big fat volume like that. We don't know whether they're really concentrating well on all that or not. But usually when you have a lot of things like that to say it's pretty hard to be concentrated.

And we actually did this kind of thing in the Sakyapa school with the book about Hevajra. There's a book there called the lamdray (lam-'bras) which was that thick. And we made the promise that we would go through that whole thing once a day. The truth was we were supposed to visualize the whole thing. But virtually nobody did that. All they did was run through as fast as possible. At a certain point one got worried that something was missing here. So there was a lot of this kind of thing based on words, praises, offerings, that kind of thing.

But probably the origin of Tantrism wasn't like that. Because it's almost certain that in the Anuttara tantras there wasn't this kind of thing. The Anuttara tantras use only mantras. That is, to authenticate, there would be a mantra.

Bonpo, chanting

And that is also when there was an offering. There was just a mantra in order to integrate that mantra into the state. That is, there was mantra for all these aspects of the rite, but they were the methods for doing it. And the visualization was an aspect of the manifestation. One visualized mentally.

However we have to remember that there was the Bonpo tradition in Tibet. However when we start talking about the influence of Bon on Buddhism, the Buddhists get a bit angry. Usually people will say "Well maybe the Nyingmapas were influenced, but us other schools, we're quite pure." However the influence is found in all. It's just enough to look at how any Tibetan Buddhist does a ritual, and you'll understand very well the Bonpo influence, even in the case of the Sakyapa and the Gelugpa who like to criticize the Nyingmapa a lot for being influenced by Bonpo.

I mean let's just take a look at the way in which the Gelugpas do their chanting with all these incredible different sounds. Let's say when they're doing the mandala of Guhyasamaja, and they take a whole day in chanting this rite of the Sangwa Dupa (gsang-ba 'dus-pa ??). But we're not just talking about the mantra of Sangwa Dupa where the offering is made, but even the way in which they chant a laudatory verse of four lines, it takes a long time to do that.

But this way of chanting does not really exist in Tantrism. This existed in the Bonpo tradition. And in the Bonpo tradition they knew why this was done. However, the modern day Bonpos don't understand the function of this kind of chanting. The Buddhists way back imitated this form of chanting without understanding either what its function was. And it's become a kind of a strange curiosity nowadays.

If we look carefully, we see that in the Bonpo there is this famous term chedong (??). Because in the Bonpo it was understood very well that sound was an excellent method for integrating subject and object and their energy. But in Tantrism there isn't this kind of classification, understanding, of energy. But there is the understanding in Tantrism that one has to do the practice with the knowledge, the recognition, of one's energy. And quite clearly sound is one of the fundamental aspects of our energy.

Let's give an example. Practitioners of the Sutras, on the one hand, are going to be doing a lot of philosophic study. But on the other side, when they're practicing, they feel like they have to remain silent. The most that they'll do are things like some kind of praises to the Buddha. But usually what they're doing is something like shinay, in which you remain silent. And this they recognize as a fundamental method for realization.

This kind of silent meditation is used in many different traditions, not only among the Buddhists. But when one is meditating silently with one's eyes closed, what is the point one is trying to get to? That is, in the Sutras the point that they might try to visualize is that the external world is not real. Eventually in the Mahayana they carry that whole dimension to the state of void. All the reasoning and all the talk is to take one to that level, the void. That is, one is sitting calmly and silently, finding oneself in that state of void.

Bonpo, energy

However in Tantrism, the method here is from the very beginning, transformation. And transformation is a way of working with energy. And to transform, one of the most efficacious methods is sound. And also the nature of energy is represented by sound, like in sounding the bell. The great masters of ancient time like Padmasambhava, Vairocana, understood this perfectly well. And they adopted and used the Bonpo methods. Even if they didn't use the Bonpo term chergong (?), they practiced Tantrism at this level.

In Bonpo what does "chergong" mean? cher doesn't mean there has to be a mantra. But cher would have to do with any kind of rite where I want to make a connection, a communication, with an external force. If I ask "What is the origin of this energy? What are its characteristics? What is the relationship that I have with this energy? How does this energy between us operate?"

For example, if I receive a negative force, with what methods can I resolve this negative influence? There's a whole kind of explanation of this. The whole explanation of these energies in Bonpo is called mang (?). But even nowadays the Bonpos don't even know this word. However this mang was not a kind of intellectual school study. This was a knowledge in a rite for controlling energies. And it was accompanied by a singer with singing and instruments. This was a method to charge oneself up, to get vibration going. So doing this kind of thing was called cher. You can still see this nowadays in certain parts of Nepal. And they call this kind of thing witchcraft. People take up some kind of drum. They jump around. But they're not just jumping around. They're also chanting and sounding various things. And what they're saying is called cher.

It's not only cher. There's also gong (?). That is, there's something to meditation. There's a bit more than witchcraft involved. The very words that one is saying one visualizes and attempts to concretize. Every once in a while one can intervene with the power of mantra. All this was characteristic of this chergong that the Bonpos used to do. It's quite clear that this is not a mistaken practice. It certainly worked. Above all it is a very vivifying thing.

Let's take a look at a practitioner who does just a Buddhist Sutric practice, a person who stays sitting calmly and quietly in a house one day, two days, three days, until they get fed up. It's quite clear that that person can develop a lot of nyams, that is, experiences arising from meditation. If there aren't these experiential signs of practice, it means that their practice is sleepy, and it's going to take a long time for them to develop.

To calm yourself is not the only way to deal with yourself. It's only a partial aspect. When we talk about a human being we usually talk about nay (gnas), gyu (g.yu), and rig. There's the calm state of naypa, but there's also the movement of mind gyuwa. When one is able to work with this movement, then self-development can come even more quickly. This is a very important point about Tantrism. In fact, it's its great advantage.

If you don't understand this, it seems Tantrism is always a bit strange, especially to someone who does Hinayana type

ritual, Bonpo

practice. If they happen to come across some Tibetan practitioners of Tantrism, they think "How strange! These people are always doing rituals and singing all the time." And also you hear people say "I don't like to do all this ritual stuff. I like to meditate." It certainly has some truth to it. Certainly if you do a lot of rituals, you become just a ritualist. And you forget what's essential. Of course that's no good.

If you know how it works, you know that ritual has a very precise function. So you see that the ancient masters of Tantrism made use of this chergong style of practice. Usually when people talk about authentic Tantrism, they think it all came from India and has nothing to do with Bonpo. But it's quite clear that in India there wasn't this type of Tibetan-style practice.

One time Professor Tucci told me that the torma system all came from the Bonpos. And I said "I don't think so because we find a lot of description of tormas in the actual Tantras." He said "No, that's not possible. Because in India there was no such thing as tsampa. How can you make tormas?" This was very interesting to me.

The way of making tormas is something very complicated. Tibetans nowadays in India have a hard time making tormas because it's so complicated. Because if you try to make a torma with rice it doesn't work too well. Certainly if there was this complicated method of Tibetan-style tormas in India, Tucci would have been correct. So there are many things like this where we have a definite indigenous Tibetan origin... [tape gap] ...

But there are many of these things where if you say that these things didn't originate in India, among these Tibetan schools they'll be very surprised. Especially among the Sakyas and the Gelugpas, if you start talking this Bonpo stuff, they won't have any of it. Because they think "If it's come from India, it's OK." And it's become a kind of nationalism. With this kind of pro-Indian nationalism, the Bonpos have no place. So even if we have a very precise and valuable thing, they don't want to recognize it.

But these kinds of things are not interesting for us. What we want to know is how things work, what the value is. We want to know how the practice of Tantrism was adapted, and what it is that we're doing. So, when we do practice, a lot of times we're using these words. Some of the words we're using are to aid in our visualizations. Others are the actual mantra.

So in this little red book of ours, we have one style of practice which is called the tromay (spros-med). That's the third one, the third tun. It begins with the AH. And it has after that the Namö Guru Bey, the homage to the three, Guru, deva, dakini. Then we have after that just the mantra for doing the Guruyoga. And then when we do the offerings to the guardians, there are only the mantras. What we have here with these mantras is what we call the natural sound of the dimension of the Sambhogakaya. So in this case we have to be doing the visualization without following the words that we have in the other tuns which describe the visualization. This is why we say this is a simple way of practicing.

refuge, bodhicitta

And after that we have another kind called trojay (spros-bcas). So here, after we make the homage to the three roots we have the refuge. But a refuge is not so important, just mouthing the words. But what one has to have is the concept that's involved present in the mind. Usually when the Tibetans do refuge they take this refuge, the Guru, then Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. While you're saying it you think to whom you're taking refuge, and that's a real refuge.

People without really understanding are reciting this refuge all the time. Many Tibetan peasants will chant the refuge as a kind of a work song. You'll find, when a peasant wife gets up in the morning, she'll start murmuring this refuge. She'll do the refuge, and then she'll do praise of Tara. And certainly there's a good intention there. This is what we call the accumulation of virtue.

But in order for it to be a real refuge, the mind has to be following what one is saying. So the use of these words in the refuge is to guide the intention that we have of taking refuge. Now if we're just reciting a mantra, that has its mantric function. But if we're not just doing it with the mantra, but we're using these words in order to guide our intention, and we don't do that, there's little worth in it. You have to know what it is you're saying, and you have to follow that.

So this verse of the refuge is a very famous one from Longchenpa "namkha (nam-mkha')", etc. The first three lines are the visualization of the so-called refuge tree. Now in what dimension does this refuge tree exist? The first line tells us. In space. The first line means "All throughout, in the fullness of this space." Now in this large space, what is it full of? We're told in the second two lines. Masters. We also have the yidams, that is, all of these manifestations whether they be peaceful, wrathful or joyful, the three types of herukas. ?? refer to these as yidam.

And then we say pawo khandro (dpa'-bo mkha'-'gro), that is daka and dakini, that is, manifestations through our energy of female or male forms. For example when we make a concentration on a chakra, there are the rays, spokes coming out from the chakra. And with each of these rays we visualize a pawo and a khandro, a male and female in union. Then from this union there is this manifestation of their energy. So pawo khandro means this kind of manifestation of energy.

Then the third line means the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha without limits. Well you might think "How big is this tree that fills up all of space? And then the last line tells you how the refuge actually takes. I and all other beings. It means I and others, that is, all beings, take refuge with respect. So the point of saying these words is to have our visualization guided. So when we say these words and we visualize and we participate from the heart, then we have a real refuge-taking.

Then after that we have the semkyed, the next four lines. Now semkyed, this bodhicitta, here we're not talking about taking some kind of a vow. But I commit myself to something. That is, I commit myself to do this. What do I commit myself to? I commit myself to the primordial state. So it begins "I and all other beings are from the very beginning in this

bodhicitta, vajra samaya
illuminated state, the Dharmakaya. So, understanding that this is how it is, I commit myself to really finding myself in this state."

Once again, it's not enough just to mouth the word, but to have this present. Usually one talks about this bodhicitta as the functioning of one's compassion. Yes, and what we are talking about is really for the sake of compassion. To commit myself to finding myself in this state is really an act of compassion, because one knows that suffering comes from the fact that beings don't recognize this state. And so from this knowledge a real serious, not artificial, compassion can arise. Because it's in this way that one can know the real cause of transmigration of all beings.

We know that the real cause of transmigration is this ignorance, marigpa. Until one finds oneself in this true state of knowledge, there is no end to this transmigration and suffering. So until then I have to commit myself to finding myself in this state and helping to carry others to it. And isn't this what we're saying these few lines? "All beings, myself and other, are from the beginning illuminated, but not recognizing this we're transmigrating, and so we commit ourselves to finding this state."

So this is the way to take refuge and do the Bodhicitta with a lot of work of the mind and some words. But more simply, just doing the AH and then the Namu Guru Bey, etc., all of this attention can be present. So you should also understand this. You shouldn't think when you're doing that simplified style of practice that you're not taking refuge for example. Because when you're sounding the AH, you can have the presence of infinite Guru, deva, dakini in space. And when one is saying the Namu Guru Bey, etc., then everything is present and one knows what it is one is doing.

Then in the short form when one just does the mantra of Padmasambhava, while one is doing that one can have the whole visualization of Padmasambhava and other, as the unification of all masters. And in the mantra when we say VAJRA SAMAYAJA, this means the presence of this wisdom of all the masters. And this mantra is usually called in Tibetan chandren (spyan-'dren ??), that is, it's an invitation mantra. In the same way, with the word SAMAYAJA we're also inviting the guardians. Samaya means the vow, the promise. And the VAJRA SAMAYAJA means this promise of the vajra, that is, a promise that can never be altered or changed. And with these words we made a true invitation.

But it's not a kind of invitation when you say "Oh! please. Come here." One can be proper about it, but you have to say "You've made your promise here." Because the masters have made their commitment that from the very beginning to help in the liberation of all beings. Even we make these kinds of promises, don't we? So beginning with Padmasambhava we have all these commitments. When we have the need of it, we can call on Padmasambhava and say "Here! Look! You've made this promise. Will you please come and fulfil it?" So this is the principle of VAJRA SAMAYAJA.

And we also utilize the mudra. In Tantrism the mudra is understood as a symbol which has its own kind of function. That is, many things are communicated just through the mudra.

mudra, OM AH HUM

Also in our society each country has its special mudras. So then when we're saying this mantra we have it accompanied by the lotus mudra. Practically speaking, this is a gesture of respect. Usually a mudra is a way of showing respect.

Then when we have the samaya mudra the hands are placed in this way. This is the gesture of promise, the mudra of promise. You remember when we do the Vajrasattva practice we always make this mudra at the heart. This is a way of remembering, recalling, that promise. So when we're doing this, after we have the VAJRA SAMAYAJA, we have the snapping of the fingers. This means "In a moment everything is manifested". It's a symbol of the shortest possible time. This means that everyone who's being invited is present.

Then we take the initiation. Then we take the actual initiation with the three-pointed vajra mudra. Then there's also a five-pointed vajra mudra, like that. But usually since we talk about the three kayas, and we have the initiation through body, speech and mind, then we have the three-pointed vajra. So with that presence of Padmasambhava visualized in front of us, at the three points in Padmasambhava, at the forehead, at the throat, and at the center of the body, we visualize a thigle of five colors at each point.

At the forehead point, in the center of that thigle we have this luminous white OM. That's the representation of the vajra, the primordial state of the body. Certainly this is not just a symbol of the vajra body of Padmasambhava, but of all illuminated beings. Then at the throat there is the red AH representing voice, and at the heart the blue HUM.

Then we do the KAYA SIDDHI OM. We link up those white rays between the two forehead points. There immediately is present within me that thigle and the luminous white OM. Then I continue to be linked with Padmasambhava with that white OM. Then with WAKKA SIDDHI AH, we have the red from the throat from Padmasambhava to our corresponding point. And then the same way with the HUM, there appears the blue HUM. This is a gradual visualization done one by one. Then with the JNANA SIDDHI AH, all three are present at the same time, not gradually, but all coming together in the three vajras. Then with the SARVA SIDDHI PHALA HUM AH, one obtains all possibly existing siddhis. Then these lights continue to stream into one. With this presence, one recites the mantra.

When the moon is waxing, we have the mantra of long life of Padmasambhava. But this is not just a long life mantra, because it's linked with this Guruyoga. Then we have the other mantra when the moon is waning. When we finish with the mantra, chanting, we once again sound OM AH HUM. When we sound this OM AH HUM, then all of the manifestations that might be surrounding Padmasambhava and his own form itself vanish into these OM AH HUM at his three places. Then all of this vanishes, streams, into my three places.

This moment is what we call the unification of the three vajras. At that point one can do what is called the vajra recitation. With inhaling have the presence of the white OM. Then you hold with the presence of the red AH, and exhale with the presence of the blue HUM. And if you can also have this link with the sound in one's breathing, OK. So you can do this vajra recitation as much as you want, but with the

vajra recitation, transformation

presence of these three vajras. So this is the most important point here, when we're trying to use our breathing in this practice of total integration.

Also we have a Guruyoga with very few words in the second tun. That is where we have the AH. Then we have the OM AH HUM three times. So here also we can have Padmasambhava visualized with the three places and then the unification and then do a lot of this vajra recitation.

Then afterwards what we do quickly then is the manifestation of the form like Guru Dragpo. That is, when we sound the HUM again, we transform ourselves into a dakini or a heruka. So at this point we've finished the dualistic style of Guruyoga in which there's a visualization and then a unification.

Now here where we're doing this manifestation of the yidam or the dakini, there's a very important point in the Dzogchen teaching that you ought to remember. Even if I'm doing a transformation into a dakini, that is, through the sounding of this HUM which itself transforms into the dakini, you should always remember that this comes from this state of the unification of the master and one's own state, that is, the state of rigpa. It's from this that the manifestation arises. So then, the practice of the yidam also becomes a Guruyoga.

So then you have to understand that a Guruyoga doesn't always mean that you're visualizing some master in front of you. A Guruyoga can be just the presence of this AH within oneself. In the same way, as we've said, the manifestation from an AH of a heruka or a dakini with the presence of this unified state of all the masters, is a Guruyoga. So to keep this in mind when practicing Dzogchen has a great advantage.

Let's say I'm doing a practice for example of a heruka. Let's take Vajrapani. Let's say I know how to do Vajrapani visualization. I know the mantra. Why do I practice this? Because I've had the transmission of Vajrapani. If I haven't had the transmission of the mantra and the visualization, there's no advantage for me trying to do this kind of practice. Where did this transmission come from? It came from a master. Vajrapani didn't give it. Now I can imagine that the master is Vajrapani, but that's something else. However if I give a lot of importance to Vajrapani in doing the visualization and the transformation and thinking this is so much more important than the master, this great Vajrapani, it's pretty hard to realize oneself through that practice.

But if you know how to practice this within an understanding of what transmission is, then this becomes very simple practice. In this history of Vajrakilaya, for example, Padmasambhava gave the transmission of Vajrakilaya to a group of disciples. And he manifested a mandala of Vajrakilaya right before them. Then at this point he said "Pay your respects." That is, do something like prostrations. And then at this point they said "Oh wow! We've finally seen a real mandala" and they began to do these long prostrations in front of this manifestation.

But the only one who understood that the transmission comes through the master, and that's the principle, was his wife Yeshe Tsogyal, who made the prostrations to

unifying the transmission

Padmasambhava. So at that point Padmasambhava said that the authentic transmission of Vajrakilaya will go through Yeshe Tsogyal. So today most of the Dorje Phurba, that is the Vajrakilaya transmission, in fact does come through Yeshe Tsogyal. Chomalug ?? it's called. This is a very significant example.

This means someone who knows how to work with the transmission. So in the Dzogchen teaching it's very important to keep this principle in mind, whatever type of visualization of heruka or whatever you're doing. In this way you won't get into so many problems in regard to having a limited conception of a whole bunch of different transmissions and initiations. The way we usually look at things is like this.

I'll give an example. Let's say a person has some kind of disturbance which we can say comes from the class of beings called dza ?? And you wonder "Well what can I do about this?" And some master might say "Oh you should do a practice of Vajrapani." Not only this, but you have to do a specific type of Vajrapani practice where you use a less wrathful form called tungchung ?? Not only that, this specific form of Vajrapani has two separate transmissions.

Let's say I've received a bunch of different Vajrapani initiations. And there are at least seven, eight, or ten different ones. But in this case, this very famous tungchung one I didn't get. But then I have to find a master who specializes in this tungchung form. However there's really nothing so specialized about this, because whatever form, like even this tungchung, it's always of Vajrapani. However if I have this kind of limitation, if I don't get this special form, I'm not happy. And so this is just an example of the way in which we don't do a lot of things.

So if one has had the transmission of a particular heruka, within the practice of Dzogchen one doesn't create this kind of mess. But one can always train oneself in it and make use of it. That is, because one knows that one unifies this heruka with the transmission in practice. And when you've had the transmission of various mantras you can use those in order to practice. And this is what we call the ideal way of practicing.

You should note very well, in this red book, that when we're sounding the HUM we can use Sihamukha or Dorje Dragpo, whatever. In this case when one is with this principal syllable, one tries to have one's own primordial state present very clearly. And then with the manifestation there's the reciting of mantra and this mantra turns. The turning of this mantra around the central syllable means that we're putting the mantra to work. We're making the mantra actually go into action. So we have the masculine form that has the clockwise rotation, and the feminine form the opposite. So this is a kind of key that can be used for all kinds of visualization.

For example someone says "I received the initiation of Kalachakra." That is, you know what the seed syllable for Kalachakra is. You know in a general way how the visualization manifests. You sound the syllable. You do the transformation, and at this moment you also have the knowledge of where this transformation came from, and you have the presence of that. And then, within this presence, there

mitogpa

appears the syllable with the mantra turning around it, and you recite it. And so, with these few words, but with this key, we can open up the whole world of practice. We're finished.

[afternoon talk]

What shall we talk about? No, really I'm going to talk about what I didn't have time to talk about the other day, this idea of mitogpa (mi-rtog-pa). This term mitogpa is used a great deal in practice, not only in Dzogchen but in any type of teaching. But the way in which it is understood is always a little bit different, if we observe ourselves a bit.

Now first of all the verb tog, togpa, in Tibetan means "to think". And then mi is the negative. So it means "not to think". This is a very common ordinary usage. So in the sutric teaching then, the way they use it means "not to think".

Then in Tantrism, that is, the way of transformation, we visualize a lot of things in order to accomplish this transformation. For example I start by visualizing the dimension which I find myself in the transformation. And visualizing myself in this dimension, that means I'm working with the mind. So this means togpa, not mitogpa. But then when I really find myself in the presence of that, in that shaypa (shes-pa), that awareness, that presence, then there is no longer togpa, so we talk about mitogpa, or non-thinking-about.

Let's use the example of someone who finds himself in a state of contemplation. That is, one finds oneself continually in this unmoving state of rigpa, that is, not moving out of the state of rigpa. But in that state let's say some apparition, some thing, appears to one. And this experience could come from some type of visualization practice that I had trained myself in. But in this case it's not that I am particularly creating that. I'm not putting my mind to visualizing that, but what I'm doing is I'm continuing in this state of the non-moving rigpa. So this vision that manifests in that state is what we call clarity.

But the condition I find myself in is mitogpa. So mitogpa doesn't mean in this case that "there's nothing there". The manifestation that's present is like a wave that comes out of the primordial state.

So let's say we're dealing with the Longde teaching of Dzogchen, and the principal teaching there is of the four das, of the dewa (bde-ba), salwa (gsal-ba), mitogpa, and yermay (dbyer-med). And finding oneself in this state, one is surrounded by all the functions of one's senses. But even if all this is present, one still doesn't enter into judgment about it. So this is a continuation in the state of rigpa which is mitogpa, "without conceptualization".

Sometimes some teachings are more associated with the Sutric Buddhism. And in this system when one is in a state of contemplation or in some type of shinay, or calm, he might have a sensation of emptiness, void, in which nothing is presenting itself. Or he might have the senses function, but what you see gives you a feeling of hollowness, emptiness of it. And this they would call a nyam, an experience of

mitogpa, or of void.

In any case, in the Dzogchen teaching, even if we talk about mitogpa, you should understand that this is not the same as the state of rigpa. If I am in this state of rigpa, then the way in which everything is present, without entering into any judgment about it, is what we call mitogpa. But the state of rigpa means the presence which is present within that. So then, the kind of experience that you have of being "without this judgment" is a type of nyam of the state of rigpa, and we call that mitogpa.

In Dzogchen practice, certainly the thing that we have to understand well is what is meant by this state of rigpa. At least we have to find some kind of idea that we can think what it might be about. And then do some practice, and then slowly in this practice begin to learn how to separate out the nyams, the meditation experiences, from the state of rigpa.

But if we want to start getting into these things right from the very beginning, it seems very complicated. Certain kind of dialectical philosophies, it seems a very elegant word, but really there's no end to that kind of philosophizing. And many people sort of make a discussion of practice become something complicated like that. Then at a certain point you think you've understood something, but then you complicate everything and you no longer understand.

Ok, let's say you're in a state of calm. A thought arises. Looking right at the thought, it disappears. This not-finding anything is what we call void. But this void itself is not the same as the state of rigpa. That state of void is itself an experience that comes about through our karmic traces. It's a nyam. But in observing that, there is a presence there that must not be lacking.

Let's take the case of a sensation. In the case of Tantrism, they make great use of the sensation of pleasure. Why do they use this? Because everyone knows how to feel that. But if you're asked to define or describe what it is one is feeling, no one can do it. It's just like this case of searching for the thought and ending up with nothing. So even if we can't get hold of anything, still sensation is something concrete for us.

So this is why they always talk about the sensation of pleasure, dewa, and tongpa (stong-pa), void. That is, you search for it, can't find it, but there's always something present. And so in Tantrism they talk about the union of these two as a way to take you to a certain state of knowledge. If we find ourselves in the true state of rigpa, which is usually referred to as the naked state, then this sensation of pleasure is always a particular experience, a nyams. And also the search for and not finding any substance to it, is also a nyam.

But in this case it's not like two things that are being put together. That is, we have a concept about unifying things. But whether we have the experience of pleasure or the experience of void, there's always that which notices it, which has the presence of that. This is how we can understand the difference between nyams and the state of rigpa.

Also the masters of Dzogchen have explained many many ways the difference between the mind and the nature of the

state of rigpa, hedewa

mind, the state of rigpa. Now it's easy to be mistaken about this. It's not very easy to make this distinction. But this is something that we should understand from the very beginning. Because the mind is always found in time, in judgment. The state of rigpa is beyond judgment and beyond time. But we're not just telling a kind of fairy story here where if we say "Oh it's beyond", then it's like something that doesn't exist.

But this is really a presence that continues. Remember that example that we give about hedewa. It's used a great deal in the Dzogchen teaching too. This is a kind of a shock that one gets when one is suddenly surprised. Let's say I'm sitting very quietly and someone shoots off a gun, or a bomb goes off. We can't really explain what feeling is going on there, but the very first moment, one jumps up. And at that point no judgment has come about. But after a second or so, then we begin to reason, that is, the mind starts functioning.

And we enter into the thought processes associated with fear. But even if we talk about fear at this state, there's not really fear yet. So in this nascent state, this is called hedewa. So it's not like one has fainted. One has not formed any definite thoughts.

But we cannot say that this state of hedewa itself is rigpa. If you think that the state of hedewa is rigpa, then you're wrong. And not only that, it can become an obstacle. Hedewa is another experience like that of the sensation of pleasure, and it's similar to being in that state of surprise. But in relation to the presence of mind or the presence of rigpa that is there in that state, the hedewa becomes a kind of a nyam.

Let's give another example. We'll give an example in terms of our sense contact. Let's say we walk by objects, and we look at them very rapidly. So we can't really begin to think about each one of those yet, because we're going by them so quickly. Because there hasn't been the time to have the sense contact communicate with the mind so it can start really working. But many times afterwards with our powers of memory, we can begin to reason and think about what we saw.

So if Norbu takes a quick glance around this room and then he looks away, he can begin to think "Ah yes, I think I can remember. There was the piano. There was the door. There were those funny lights up there above the door", etc. So in that moment when he's just making the quick glance, which cannot really be explained, there is still the presence of rigpa which continues, what we talked about the day before yesterday in the little book. Remember we said that when we have the contact with the senses, in that very first moment before there is the grasping by thought, there is that presence of the state of rigpa.

This kind of talk with these kinds of examples is a very important means to understand. Many times Dzogchen masters give an initiation called the rigpay tsalwang (rig-pa'i rtsal-dbang). And in this they will suddenly say "Phat" in order to cut off the stream of thought. Or one will be engaged in a process of reasoning, and that will be cut off and one will be asked to observe how one is in that state. We should try to make use of these things ourselves, make use of

primordial state, not-correcting
these examples and try to do some experimentation in order to understand.

Because to learn the practice of Dzogchen, to do it, is not just to learn how to sit, how to breathe, how to meditate. Certainly these relative things one can learn how to do very well. And certainly for all the types of Dzogchen teaching you can find a lot of discussion about how to sit, how to breathe, in each one. But in a few words, what they all communicate is the knowledge of this primordial state. What the Dzogchen Longde for example, talks about very elaborately, is just the four Da. But it's all just to notice, to find oneself, in this state. But if you haven't understood this, if you haven't found this, then even if you've done a whole lot, then you really feel a bit empty at the end.

Now these four Da are a way of doing practice. And it says "You sit like this. You get into this position. You look in this particular way." That is, when you begin to control your bodily position, then you can begin to control your prana. And then through this there can be a relaxation of one's attention. And thus it becomes easier to notice this state of primordial presence. So then you can do this if you've understood what it's about. But we haven't said that you have to take up this particular position for one's whole life. But if you do this without understanding, then you really won't conclude anything. This is true not only for the Longde, but for all other practices.

Now many methods are given for doing practice. The conclusion of all of them simply is to find oneself in this state of rigpa. So it's quite important to understand this if one wishes to be a practitioner of Dzogchen. And one has to work with all aspects of our existence to understand this, with the breath, with the body, with the mind.

I'll give you an example taken from the Dzogchen Semde. A person would be sitting in this way closing the nostrils and the ears. That is, two fingers to close the nostrils, two to close the ears. Then you exhale, but there's no way for the air to get out. And what happens in this case? It's a kind of what we call rushan (ru-shan), that is, a strange state. [laughter]. And in this one can then see what the state of the nyams is, and what the presence of the state of rigpa is. This is a way of working pretty much at the bodily level.

And then many examples are given to have an idea also just through the imagination. Let's take that famous Tibetan phrase machopa (ma-bcos-pa), "don't correct". They illustrate this state of machopa, nor nalma (rnal-ma), this natural state, with the example of the small child. This is an example that gives you an idea. Now all of us have presumably been little children at one time. Unfortunately we don't remember how we really were when we were small. But now we can maybe at least get an idea of it.

Let's take a small child that we take to a place where there's a lot of things around. The child looks at everything. But they don't look around like we do, judging everything "Ah this one is more beautiful than that. This one is like this", etc. They're kind of spellbound. There's a presence there without a lot of judgment. Thus through a lot of examples like this, this can help us in understanding the

teaching.

There are many methods that are used in the stage of direct introduction. For example, a person is walking and then suddenly they stop. Or this can be the case of an idea. I can be thinking about something according to a certain procedure or rule, and then suddenly I'll interrupt myself or somebody else will interrupt me. If you remember in the practice of the semzin, there's the practice of observing one's thoughts and then suddenly sounding a sharp PHAT or a HUM to interrupt. But the principle here is not just to block or to stop one's thoughts, but what is the state that one finds oneself in just after that?

Perhaps some of you have read this tshig-gsum gnas-dag ?? of Patrul Rinpoche, the commentary on Garab Dorje's three words. There he talks about suddenly sounding the PHAT and then asking "How does that state present itself, right after?" And certainly if you're sitting and practicing and someone else does it, almost certainly you'll find the state of hedewa. But always, this hedewa, if you can notice it, is governed by the presence of the state of rigpa. Or if we ourselves sound very strongly this PHAT in the moment in which our thoughts are arising, one can have an even more clear presence of the state of rigpa. In short there are many methods which one can use to try to understand.

Now look, the Dzogchen teaching is usually called a very secret teaching because this primordial state of consciousness, this rigpa, is beyond everything. We can't understand it through reasoning. And in this sense it becomes something very secret. The meaning of secret is that it's extremely difficult to understand and extremely difficult to communicate. Most people think secret means "Oh it's something that shouldn't be talked about. It's something that should be hidden."

Now there are things in practice which should be hidden. Because if we don't hide them then they can be of harm to someone rather than of benefit. And even within the Dzogchen teaching there are certain practices of this type, such as practices involved in the thogay (thod-rgal) in which there's development of one's experience of light. In this case one has to have a very precise preparation, because otherwise it's going to do you harm rather than good. So in this case the master will be aware about whether the person has the possibility to do that. If they don't, they'll leave it. It's secret.

But it's not a secret in the sense that one is hiding it to keep that person from realizing themselves. Because to communicate the state of rigpa means to help that person realize himself, to wake up. We always find ourselves in this state of ignorance in which we're very limited and very closed. Then the only way to overcome this is to have a teaching which communicates how to wake that person up. And if one says that such a teaching is something very secret, something you have to keep quiet about, that's completely mistaken.

So you have to understand what secret means. Yes there are certain things that have to be kept secret, and others that certainly must not be secret. And then there's what we

secrecy

can call the great secret, that is, the knowledge of the state of rigpa. Because its own state is naturally secret because it's so naturally difficult. When we take a look at our body, our voice, and our mental existence, and somebody arrives and we say "Who is that person?", this means that we're dealing with something visible. I look and I see well. A very tall person is coming.

But let's say I haven't seen, and I can ask Norbu "Well, who's come in?" And he can say "Oh that very tall fellow is coming." He can say "Come over here. Take a look. There he is." This is something direct. It's not very complicated. So in this way we say that our physical, our bodily, existence is something very easy, simple, to understand. If we talk about a secret at this level of physical existence, it means you hide something behind something else, or in something else. We say "Oh, I put something very secret inside my chest of drawers and you're not supposed to look at that." So that's the material way of something being secret.

Another kind of secret is the way in which the vocal dimension is secret. For example, if one doesn't speak up but just murmurs, then one doesn't understand what's being said. Or if one doesn't pronounce things correctly, or one doesn't understand the language correctly, there's no communication. Certainly if one doesn't pronounce with the voice, then there's no vocal communication. And the characteristic of the voice is that it's something that cannot be seen or touched. That is, it's more secret than the material, bodily, level. That is, its nature is already more secret than the material level.

For example we say "Oh if you practice this mantra, then you might be able to cure your illness." And you might say "Well why should it cure my illness?" And we would say "Oh it's because that mantra has power." Then you might say "Well where is this power? What is it like?" That's the natural secret of it. All one can do in this case is to practice it, to cure oneself, and then you can say "See it. It works!" That's because until you do that yourself, I can't show you how that energy works. It's not something that you can touch, get a hold of. So this means that its nature is already secret.

But then, even more secret is this state of rigpa. So we also talk at this level about the nature of the mind. But without even talking about the nature of the mind, even the mind, the relative mind, is something difficult to understand. For example, I look at someone. I see someone sitting there all bundled up, looking very sad, and I think they probably feel quite bad. Why do I think that? Because their physical dimension is manifesting.

But in that case if I look into that person's face, if I haven't developed my clarity, I'm certainly not going to know what they're thinking. We always think about and judge what other people are thinking through looking at their face, for example. So already you can see that the mind is already much more complicated, much more secret. So if we talk about something beyond all limits, beyond time, that becomes incredibly complex. [tape gap] ... or that case where the scholar came to debate Milarepa, and Milarepa said that rocks

secrecy, Adzom Drugpa were not material, and then he ran his hand right through it. Or he said "Oh space is material" and he picked up his stick and he banged on space and it made a sound.

All this seems completely upside down and in contradiction to our minds. This is what we mean by being totally beyond and unlimited. We don't really have a possibility to understand this. I can say three plus three is six. Or eight divided by two becomes something or other. You might say "four", but maybe I'll say "three". Because if you're going to cut that number it becomes three. So this is a way of saying if it's something physical, something logical, we can enter into an understanding of that. We have no other way of understanding things.

So this is the reason we talk about things being secret. It's very important to understand this. Many people might say whether they're teaching it or practicing it, that it's something very secret and you shouldn't do it in this particular way. Or people will have the attitude that the teaching is something very sacred, that must always be presented in a temple with a lot of incense going. But this is not really true. Because what the teaching is, is based on a principle of knowledge. It's not necessary to have a lot of formality in the teaching. What's sufficient is to understand a bit, in some way or other.

A very interesting example is my uncle the Togdan (rtogs-dan). Once upon a time I had an uncle. When he was young he wasn't the kind who was a monk or went to school. But his family were jewelers who worked with gold and silver. And his family had him working at this. His father had him working at this until he was eighteen or nineteen years old. That's all he did. He didn't even have the time to study so he could learn how to read well. At a certain point he became ill. He became crazy.

My grandfather had him go to a Dzogchen master named Adzom Drugpa. That master did something or other, perhaps to balance his energy and his elements. In any case he became fairly normal again. And in that way he came to follow the teaching of that master. He wasn't a very cultured fellow, but he found himself in this midst of all these cultured disciples who had spent a long time with Adzom Drugpa. Certainly if the master Adzom Drugpa found himself with many disciples who were scholars or monks and were very well-educated, he couldn't simply go about speaking in a very simple way as if they knew nothing. So my uncle, even though he'd been following for several months, couldn't really understand what was going on. What he understood minimally was how to do a few practices, how to recite a few mantras.

But as we've said, the principle of the Dzogchen teaching is not this. Perhaps Adzom Drugpa was not very happy about this situation, so he said to my uncle "Why don't you go to this place to do a retreat there, a retreat for a couple of years." But he asked that another disciple of his accompany my uncle. This was a very simple man who didn't know all the formalities of the teaching. But Adzom Drugpa considered that he was a true yogi and a good practitioner. And so Adzom Drugpa asked that disciple of his to accompany my uncle to the place where he was to do his retreat.

Adzom Drugpa, cause and effect

Now certainly that Adzom Drugpa gave a bit of advice to his disciple about how he was to accompany my uncle. So to get from that place where Adzom Drugpa was to where my uncle was to do his retreat, even if you went very slowly, it wouldn't take more than twelve days. But those two took three months to get there. So this disciple of Adzom Drugpa, Lutri Togdan (??), was a very strange fellow who liked to wander about everywhere. He never went straight to where he was going. He went to the right. He zig-zagged to the left. He took a very long path. And sometimes he took a tour of the whole region in order to ask for food. Also sometimes he would go about visiting many monasteries.

But above all what he was looking for was cemeteries. Whenever he came to a cemetery or some strange place, he liked to stay for three or four or five days. Then he would go about for a few days getting a few things to eat. So all this time Lutri Togdan told stories and jabbered and talked with my uncle, who was also called Togdan. So when my uncle got to his retreat place, he was all set, because he'd understood by that time, even though he wasn't a cultured fellow. So after he finished his retreat, Adzom Drugpa called him back and gave him many teachings and asked him many questions, and Adzom Drugpa was very satisfied. This is an interesting example.

So the teaching doesn't have to be presented in a very formal organized way. What's important is that one understands well. You can understand the true meaning of the teaching in the bathroom, in the kitchen, walking around somewhere. This means the teaching doesn't have to be presented in a very elegant way, in a perfumed temple. So what is most important is to know how to use the teaching in order to understand well. That's it.

[morning talk]

Now it is said that the Dzogchen teaching is a teaching that goes beyond cause and effect or cause and result. So when Garab Dorje first began teaching the Dzogchen teaching, everyone said "Oh here is something teaching gyu dray lay day (rgyu 'bras las 'das), something beyond cause and effect. And it was like they considered that he was a provocateur.

Why was this? It's very simple. When the Buddha Shakyamuni was in this world, we know very well that the first thing that he communicated was the four noble truths. This was taught according to how our actual condition is. What we find in our life most present is suffering, because this suffering is related to our physical body, our concrete existence. Thus one of the easiest things for us to understand is this suffering.

But this suffering is something that can't come about without some cause. Let's say hunger. That's a tiny kind of suffering. And the cause is obviously that one hasn't eaten. It might be because one has no money. And you don't have money because you don't have work. This is what we mean when we talk about cause. So in this case what one has to talk about precisely is cause and effect, that is, karma, and how it is produced. So we have the first noble truth, that of suffering, and then the second, its cause.

So people work with this kind of teaching and they move

cause & effect, Garab Dorje themselves toward the teaching. And thus with this logic they can begin to make use of the path. And in this way they are able to remove, eventually, all suffering. This is basically what the Buddha taught.

But in this situation if one suddenly hears there's some guy giving a teaching that goes beyond cause and effect, it seems that his is something very strange and indeed provocative. But if one understands well, it's nothing to be surprised about, because that is really what the Buddha also always taught. Because the conclusion of these four noble truths that the Buddha taught is usually referred to as the famous prajna paramita. This term basically means a going beyond even the intellect, the concept of the intellect. So the teaching doesn't just end with the noble truth of suffering or its origin, or that of the path, or that of the cessation of suffering.

In the Mahayana Sutras we have that famous Heart Sutra. And in all the monasteries, even in Tibet, they probably recite this little Sutra seven or eight times. And I also heard this chant in Zen centers in Japanese language. It sounded pretty strange to me. But I learned that this was that Sutra. In this Sutra they talked about how the path and how primordial wisdom, etc., do not exist. So it's not that the Buddha just reserved his teaching to be the four noble truths. So then there's nothing to be surprised about Garab Dorje's teaching beyond cause and effect.

Now we usually say that Garab Dorje was a very important, very particular, teaching in regard to Dzogchen. That is, his teaching from the very beginning was not a gradual teaching. This was a teaching that had the capacity to go right to the primordial condition of the mind of the individual. For those people who couldn't understand this, then what he could talk about and explain to them was what the capacities of the individual were and what was necessary for this teaching.

Since we are not very used to this kind of directness in our usual way of seeing, we feel that somebody is provoking us. Garab Dorje taught this teaching and it was followed by various masters. He taught it and it was also spread to various places. However it kind of remained as a kind of resistance movement against our gradual way of approaching things.

We can understand this if we take a look at ourselves in general. Let's take the example of Tibet. What a person imagines when they hear talk about the Buddhist teaching in Tibet is a group of people together in a monastery. And when they hear that a monastery is growing into thousands of people, they call that the spread of Buddhism. And when they hear about someone building a temple of gold and silver, they call this a fantastic activity in behalf of the teaching. And everyone still has this kind of idea.

But we're not only talking about poor uncultured peasants. But people who have a lot of culture also carry this kind of idea about the teaching. Now, many of these people know very well what the teaching means and what its essence is. But they still live within this kind of cultural idea of Buddhism, within these habits, within this normal

provocation, view, attitude
usage, as if there was some kind of resistance to breaking out of that.

If you suddenly explain something very directly that corresponds to the essence of the teaching, people think you're provoking them. So in this situation the Dzogchen teaching, even though it was not purposely hidden, remains something kind of hidden. Now today there are many practitioners, not only in the Nyingmapa school, but in the Sakyas and in the Kagyudpas, and yes also in the Gelugpas, who will practice Dzogchen. And the way they practice this is within their own knowledge, that is, they try to continue in the state of rigpa.

But they never whisper a single word that what they're doing is Dzogchen, or "I'm a Dzogchenpa." And they never demonstrate outwardly any kind of practice that corresponds with the tawa, the gumpa, or chodpa (spyod-pa) of Dzogchen. That is, they have this kind of internal knowledge, but in terms of how they manifest the tawa, the way of explanation, the way of seeing, and the way of behavior, they remain within those cultural limits and habits.

Let's talk about a very great geshe of the Gelugpa school. Let's talk about Tomo Geshe Rinpoche, who died in olden times. He was a great scholar, but he was also very much on the level of the real meaning of practice. And he practiced Dzogchen. And he also communicated the Dzogchen teaching to a few people in a very secret manner. Above all he hid a few of his writings on Dzogchen. And this was the only way we had to know that he was a practitioner of Dzogchen. But in the way he lived his life and presented himself, there was no way to know that he was a Dzogchen practitioner. And the way he presented his way of seeing things was that of the Gelugpa school of the teaching of Tsong Khapa.

So it's not always the case that the tawa, the way of seeing, and the practice correspond. Because what the tawa becomes within the school is a kind of fortress to maintain their position. If I don't maintain the tawa of my school, then the tawa and my relationship with the school will disappear. In the case of Tomo Geshe rinpoche, if he were to announce, as it were, that he was following the tawa of Dzogchen, he'd in effect be thrown out of the Gelugpa school. So he was constrained to say that he was a protagonist of the tawa of his school.

Now also in regard to the chodpa, the attitude, the mode of behavior, in this case, it's quite clear that a practitioner of Dzogchen doesn't have to make a point about being a monk for example. But if a practitioner of Dzogchen, with the attitude of Dzogchen, applies it as he feels it should be applied, then you might end up with the example like of the sixth Dalai Lama. The sixth Dalai Lama was a practitioner of Dzogchen. You can just see this by looking in the back of the Potala, in this little temple Dzongta Lhakang ???. In this temple the paintings that were commissioned were commissioned by him. And I made slides of these, and they were all of the visions of the thogay. This was someone who lived really within the world of this type of practice.

Because he had this knowledge of Dzogchen, that is, of the way of self-liberation, you might say it influenced very

sixth Dalai Lama, culture

much his way of behaving. And he began to slip out of the Potala to go hang out in the bars and drink wine. And he began to take the girls he met there for walks around Lhasa, and to sing them his beautiful love songs, and everyone knows the story of the sixth Dalai Lama. Some of his ministers and government officials took his case to the Chinese emperor. He had to quit Lhasa and he was taken towards China.

Then at that point there are two biographies, the official and the secret. The secret biography tells us where he went and the kind of practices he does, all this kind of thing. But the official biography says he never got to China, to Peking, but he died along the road. Thus they say that very soon after, the seventh Dalai Lama, the reincarnation, was born, and returned to Lhasa.

So this is what we mean by a practitioner who doesn't continue in his position and in the way he should be behaving. This is the kind of thing that happens, as in the case of the fifth Dalai Lama. Now the fifth Dalai Lama was also someone who knew about Dzogchen. Certainly in regard to gumpa, in regard to meditation, the knowledge that he had was of Dzogchen. And we have beautiful texts that he's written about the trecho and thogay teachings of Dzogchen.

But if we look at the way he behaved, he was one of the most elegant Dalai Lamas that ever was. And it was he who assumed power over all of Tibet on the part of the Dalai Lama. He put the Kagyudpas in their place. This seems really strange, doesn't it?

So what you have to understand is that the tawa, the gumpa, and the chodpa proceed according to the conditions of the individual. Now I'm not saying that they have to go off in different directions. Certainly if one is a practitioner and there is the opportunity, the best thing is to try to integrate all of these things. This means that one really becomes a practitioner of Dzogchen. But culture and tradition are very strong, in general.

For example in Tibet, very recently there was this very famous Gedan Chopel (dge-ldan chos-'phel ??). He was originally from Amdo, and his family were Nyingmapa practitioners. But he became a monk of a Gelugpa monastery. He studied for many years and became a very great scholar, and thus he came to Lhasa. And I think he was at the Drepung Monastery. And he kept studying until he became a geshe. But he wasn't satisfied with that. He eventually became the toughest geshe who could debate with anyone at any time, and defeat them. This means someone who's trained themselves in words, and they're very good at it. In this way he became very famous.

But at a certain point he began talking in a very strange way. Because perhaps he still had a few traces from his original Nyingmapa family. And maybe he was reading on the side a little bit about the way the Nyingmas talk about things. And in this case he certainly must have been interested in Dzogchen. And we can see this by taking a look at his work. So without using the term Dzogchen he began to have discussions with some of the other geshe and take up a very strange position. He succeeded in holding this very strong contrary position.

provocation, Gedan Chophel

At a certain point these "battles" that Gedan Chophel was having became known. There became known a "Gedan Chophel philosophy". Then he began to make these geshees understand that even the statements of Tsong Khapa were a bit off. And certainly this was a great provocation. Then there began a great exchange of polemics. At a certain point he had to escape to India. He spent many years in India studying Sanskrit and also English. He was a very intelligent man. He was someone who could learn languages very easily. He also began to do a lot of research on the history of Tibet. He was the only Tibetan scholar at that time who gave at least a little importance to the Bonpo as the foundation of Tibetan culture. Especially he concentrated on analyzing the early period of Tibetan history.

He also continued to hold his own philosophical positions. He began to negate one of Tsong Khapa's philosophical positions called the tanye sechu ???. This was definitely something dangerous for him to do. Then another thunder arose. That is, a rumor arose that he was a communist spy. The Tibetan government requested the Indian government to extradite him back to Tibet. It's absolutely certain that he was not a political man. In the end the Indian government consigned him over to the Tibetans. But even though there were no concrete charges, they took him to jail. Up until the time when the communist Chinese took over, he remained in jail.

Then about a year after the Chinese arrived, they finally liberated him. It was quite clear that he was not in a good state of health either physically or mentally. It was quite clear that he really despaired. Because he was someone who worked for the benefit of Tibet, doing a study of its history and culture. And when he got out he became an alcoholic. And he was physically very ill. He lived a very short time and then died.

Also when he was in India he carried on a bit, following his natural inclinations. He didn't follow any of the rules for a geshe or a monk. Even while he was in India he researched and wrote a commentary on the Kamasutra. Finally in the end he said, at the end of his commentary, he said he compared it with that of another famous Tibetan scholar, Mipham, and he said "Yes, Mipham wrote this book, but Mipham was a monk." He said Mipham's was just based on imagination, but his book was much more efficacious because it was based on concrete research. So we have this case of a practitioner like Gedan Chophel who was not permitted to act according to his understanding of the teachings by the society.

So it's very difficult to promulgate a teaching beyond cause and effect in which there are not prescribed rules. [tape gap] ... and the rest of the more official famous teachers made the way of behaving a bit - , they changed it. So people ask "How can such famous masters do things in that way?" Many times however, it's not that they chose to do it this way. But that they were in this position where they had to maintain and follow according to the position they were in.

Now certainly when a person learns the Dzogchen teaching, it's very important to know what its authentic origin is. And when it comes time to apply their knowledge, whether it be in

Bonpo, Dzogchen

regard to the way of behaving, or in regard to the tawa, they certainly know how to make use of the teaching. This kind of thing doesn't only happen in the Dzogchen teaching of Buddhism, but we have the same thing in the Dzogchen of the Bonpo.

Also if we look at the Bonpo Dzogchen, it's something extremely interesting. Just take a look at the lineage of masters of the Bonpo Dzogchen, known as the Zhangzhung Nyangyud (snyan-brgyud). Now they have their initiation for this tradition, but it's not an initiation that really belongs to the Zhangzhung Nyangyud itself. But they took it from the general method of Tantric initiation. That is, when a person takes some kind of commitment or vow, then they do it in the form of an initiation. It's just like we have in the case of Tantrism, when one takes on the kyerim and the dzogrim.

Also we have the famous teaching of the Bonpos called meri ???. And they give an initiation of this meri. In this case what they're actually giving is the actual Zhangzhung Nyangyud teaching. And at a certain point in this meri teaching there are actual words that are supposed to be given of the masters of this tradition. Let's say there are fifty or sixty masters in that lineage. At this point they'll give the actual words that that master used to communicate the teaching. Another master said this.

And then they also have a representation, a picture of the master. And in fact they have this little picture book. So there's the picture, and on the back is his sayings. So when they're giving this initiation they show the picture, and the master reads from the back what the master in the lineage said. This is quite interesting. I received this kind of initiation. This is the only direct initiation I had from the Bonpo. This made quite an impression on me, this showing of the pictures of the masters. And what they first showed was the whole lineage of the masters of Zhangzhung. The pictures were very strange. They were dressed in these animal skins of tigers and leopards with strange crowns made out of animal horns.

Then finally they came down to where the actual Tibetan masters started with Nongjay Lepo ??. But still the pictures of these masters were pretty strange. Some of them were still wearing animal skins. But especially their hair was really wierd. Or they had extremely long hair. Slowly slowly it got down to more recent times.

Even in the Bonpo they have a kind of Tsong-khapa-like figure. His name is Sherab Jetsun (shes-rab rje-btsun ??). He made a kind of reform like Tsong khapa did, and then there began to develop a lot of Bonpo monks. With Sherab Gyatso (shes-rab rgya-mtsho) began a whole long series of very elegant monks in the lineage. There is not a single one who wasn't a monk in this succession. Interesting, huh?

What this means was that at a certain time the way of behaving was constructed on the basis of their social condition. So at that time, if someone was to be a master, then it means it had to be in a monkish style. In the same way, this was the way it was in the schools of Tibet, maybe the Nyingmapas a little less so. It's true.

When I was in Sikkim, it's true the Karmapa asked me to

monks, rules

become a monk. But I said I didn't really feel like becoming a monk because the conditions of society were not adapted to it. At that time the Karmapa was at Rumtek ??, and one day he actually sent a monk to bring me to Rumtek. So he was ordaining two tulkus, two reincarnations, to become monks. But you needed three. So he wanted Norbu to become the third one. But Norbu sent back a letter saying "Oh, I'm very sorry, but I'm very busy right now. I have a lot of work to do. I can't come right away."

Then after a couple of days I thought "Maybe I'd better go right to the Karmapa and tell him what I think, because otherwise he will be offended." It was quite clear that I couldn't have gone the very day that he was going to ordain the monks, because I probably would have ended up a monk. But after a few days I went there when I was ready to explain how I felt. I explained to him every way I could. I said "First of all, I have studied the Vinaya very well. For me it wouldn't be very easy to have all these rules present and follow them. I know also, that if I was to become a monk, I would have to necessarily live in a monastery. Because I would have to have contact with the other monks."

Because if you think that you're a monk, but you don't live within a community of monks, then there's no means to make the confession. And there's no such thing as a monk who doesn't go to confessional. And there are 253 rules of the monk, and one can err in any one of these. How could it be that the monk would not make a mistake and have something to confess? If a monk commits an error, there has to be this confession in order to cleanse it. Otherwise the errors become heavier and heavier. There are five basic rules that one cannot even purify by confession.

But after this there are thirteen heavy ones that I can still confess and purify. But this kind of confession one has to do every fifteen days. But if you leave it for a long time, then you're going to get a bit stale. And in this case those thirteen of the secondary heavy sins, as it were, become into the class of the first five. And if you wait in your confession, then even the minor transgressions can go into the category of the major ones. For a monk this confession cannot be made in an imaginary form, by imagining the Buddhas, etc. This only can be done on the level of the bodhisattva vows.

But the monks' vows are something taken from a human being, and it must be confessed to a human being. Even if one renounces one's vows, if a monk wants to renounce his vows, he can't go up to a statue of the Buddha and say "I can't make it any more. I'd like to restore these vows to you." But there has to be another person present when one makes this declaration, and it's only at that point that one can say that my vows have been lost. If one tries to be a monk as an individual outside the monastic community, you can see all of the errors and all the difficulties that are going to accumulate.

So I was very aware of this, and it was for this reason that I didn't wish to become a monk, and this is what I explained to the Karmapa. My motive wasn't that I didn't want to stay in a monastery. I liked the women - this wasn't my motive. But the more I explained this, the more the Karmapa

traditionalism

insisted that I should become a monk. Finally I said "Why must I become a monk?" He said to me very clearly "If you don't become a monk you won't be able to really work for the benefit of others on a large scale."

This really surprised me. I said "My master, Changchub Dorje, wasn't a monk. He taught, and by virtue of that a lot of people understood the teaching." He said "To really expand the Buddhist teachings and do a great job of it, you must become a monk." But I said "I don't really have much hope of being a great Buddhist protagonist." With this kind of talk we finished.

Finally I had to go to Italy. Certainly before leaving I went to see the Karmapa, because I had a number of links with the Karmapa. He was the one who recognized me as an incarnation, for example. I went above all so I wouldn't anger him. And he gave me a little statue of the Buddha which I still have that's beautiful, that's really incredible. When he gave me the statue he said "I give you this statue as a remembrance in order for you to remember that one day you should become a monk." I said "If one day I do become a monk, I promise I'll come to you to take the vows. I won't go to anybody else." That was my response.

So this is a way of looking at things which is linked to what we call traditionalism. For example, in the Sakya monasteries, not only the Sakyas, principally the Sakyas and the Gelugpas, but also the Kagyud and the Nyingma, the monk is someone who really represents something, a very symbolic figure. But if this monk decides to take up with a woman, then he's like trash. It's even as if that person no longer exists. That is even worse than a lay person. Of course that person has now become outside the monastic community.

But let's say there are also some people who are not monks but who possess a certain knowledge of the teaching, especially in the Nyingma and the Kagyudpa schools. Then they say these people can have a possibility they call rangchung ?? (rang-'byung ??). That is they can say these people are real upholders of Tantrism. But even to have this kind of position, this has to be a very cultured person.

And then these people begin to tie up their like John and also do a lot of other elegant things, and they dress in non-normal ways, with white and red clothes. And then when there are some interesting people like this, then they start talking about these people as tertons, or something of this kind. But this is a very abnormal situation. There are very few people like this, that is, not monks. But for the rest of them, if they're not monks, they mean nothing at this official level.

But if we look very well at the Dzogchen teaching, at someone who possesses this state of knowledge of rigpa, then there is the way of looking, the tawa, that corresponds to that state of practice. And then that way of looking governs that person's way of living, chodpa. Then we talk about a true yogi of the Atiyoga. At this level there's no difference whether one is a monk or not. In this case there's no special idea about spreading the teaching. There's no falsifying construction that's made. According to Dzogchen, to make the teaching spread, is to make this state of primordial knowledge

spread.

So you should understand that culture and the real knowledge of the state of Dzogchen are not always on the same level. I always say that a person who is interested in the Dzogchen teaching must first of all understand what the tawa, the way of seeing, of the Dzogchen teaching is. And then through this tawa one can enter into, and make an application of, it in practice. And then in this way our whole way of living and way of comporting ourselves can be integrated into this experience. In this way we don't falsify anything about our situation. The knowledge that we have corresponds to our actual condition. So I think for us, whether it be for our practice or for our knowledge, it's something that we should understand well.

Now one of the things that this special master whom I always talk about, Changchub Dorje, taught me, was the way in which the tawa, the gompa, and the chodpa all are interlocking and correspond to each other. Now let's say we make a scholarly study of Buddhist philosophy. The first thing that is talked about is the tawa, the way of seeing. We're not just talking about Hinayana, Mahayana.

But just within the Tibetan Buddhist schools, the Gelugpas expound this fantastic way of viewing that Tsongkhapa had. Even if many scholars are not fully convinced of this point of view, they have to officially present themselves as completely convinced of it. The most they can do is sneak in a few variations on minor points. Because otherwise they're not going to arrive at the favorable and solid position that they want. If one wants to become a general, he has to start off at the level of corporal. He has to behave well, follow the rules, and demonstrate that he is very attentive to what he has to obey. And thus he always has a possibility of rising in the ranks.

All institutions are based on this principle. Let's say I want to become a really good Nyingmapa. The first thing I have to know is what Longchenpa said. Even if I'm not thoroughly convinced of something he said, I have to make believe that those things are not important. If I find a mistake, I have to say it's not a mistake. In some way I have to justify and defend it. And then I become a great upholder of the Nyingmapa. And the other schools all do the same thing.

But if I talk about whatever I really think, as Norbu usually does, I become kind of like a bat, or like an owl who goes out one day. Usually what happens is that all the other kinds of birds nip at the owl and they bother him. If I explain everything as it really is, then people will start poking me in my ears, in my feet, in my toes, somewhere. So usually what people should do in this case is indulge in a bit of public relations.

So the tawa usually means, in the case of a school, that you have this position and you follow it and uphold it. But if one starts getting into subtleties, in the Gelugpa school for example, we have the figure of Chankya Rolpa Dorje (lcang-skya rol-pa rdo-rje ??). It's very interesting. He has written many many texts. And then we also have the very famous Changgu Jépa (??) He's also written many books and

commentaries.

This Chankya Rolpa Dorje gave one of his spiritual songs. When we say spiritual song, we mean a spontaneous song. This is not a philosophical text in which he was arguing against some point or other. What came out in one of these songs was that he wasn't too satisfied with what Tsong khapa had to say. This was noted by several Nyingmapas, like Mipham. They took this out of context in order to demonstrate their point, and they did this in order to annoy the Gelugpas.

This is how the tawa is usually done. This is how each school defines its point of view. So "our school" defines itself in regard to this, in regard to this, in regard to this. Now we're not even talking about very profound levels of philosophy here. But let's take a very simple example. I read once in the history of the lamdray (lam-'bras) teaching of the Sakyas. They talk a little in the beginning about the very ancient kings of Tibet, just as a way of saying "Well at first there wasn't any Buddhism, and then it came along." They had to give some date as to when this ancient king existed when there was not Buddhism. He didn't go into an explanation about the controversy like "somebody said it was this date and somebody said this one, and someone said that". He said "It's certain that there are many different references here. But for us, we follow the calculation made by Dampa Gyaltsan (?? rgyal-mtshan), this year. And this is what we have to follow."

He actually wrote this down "we've got to follow this because Dampa Gyaltsan said it." And I was amazed. This was part of their tawa even. So if study proceeds in this way after many many years, many many centuries, the tawa becomes something extremely gigantic with all these little teeny weeny points in it.

Even when the Nyingmapa school presents the tawa of Dzogchen, it's become "We're the Nyingmapas. Our essential teaching is Dzogchen. The tawa of Dzogchen is X Y Z." And in this way they construct a kind of Dzogchen school. But this has no correspondence whatsoever with real Dzogchen.

Very simply put, the tawa of Dzogchen is not something to be seen outside, but to be found within. So we say "Take a look at yourself just as if you were looking in a mirror. In this way you'll understand what your condition, what your existence, is." And thus we have our famous saying that what we discover is that we're like a little bird trapped in a cage. We might even discover that the tawa, our way of looking at things, is this cage itself. It might be transparent. It might be crystal. But it's very strong, very solid.

Therefore in the Dzogchen teaching, there is nothing whatsoever to defend or to construct, when you have the capacity to turn this way of looking within. So in this case, without having to negate anything, the whole edifice of all these complex constructions of the view of the schools crumbles. So even if there are all these incredible writings, very elegantly done, they're just the working of the mind. These things only have value when you enter into that level, and then you can say "Ah, you say that way but I say this way. You say this and I counter with that."

view, practice, behavior

So to understand what's happening here is what we have to do with Dzogchen, and then we have tawa. And then you finally also begin to understand what we mean by the teaching. And then you'll also understand what it was that the Buddha himself communicated and explained and what you have to put into practice. This is the real tawa.

When you have this, then there's something to apply, something to put into practice. If I really understand that I am boxed in, caged into all of my limits like a little bird in a cage, then you know what the cage is like, why it exists, and also, how to get out of it. So you take this knowledge that you've gained about yourself, and you put it into practice. That's what we call gompa, meditation.

Then when you discover what your primordial condition really is, you can act in terms of the chodpa. A practitioner must really try to understand in this way and to find himself at this level. That is, tawa doesn't remain at the level of words. The tawa doesn't become a concept. The tawa becomes like a mirror for ourselves. We don't always look outward with our two little eyes to see objects. This is the way in which we analyze and reason intellectually about everything. On the other hand though, the tawa is like the mirror through which we discover our own condition.

Thus the practice, or gompa, begins to function. Thus we know how to consider what gompa is. We begin to discover all the limitations we put on what practice is. Usually we say "Look! This is a teaching. This is the system. Then there's also this other system here." We get all conditioned by texts, by teachings, by titles, words. This is all a manifestation, a result, of not discovering what our condition actually is.

If we really find ourselves in this state of rigpa, that which we call self-perfectedness, lhundrub, this state of self-perfectedness, the state of lhundrub, is like a crystal ball. And we place this crystal ball onto this yellowish silk. This crystal seems to be yellow. If we put in on something black, it seems black. If we put in on green, it seems green. This is an aspect of lhundrub itself. It's not that one has to construct in this case the red or the green or the yellow crystal.

When one possesses this condition, that is, of primordial knowledge, there's nothing that can really limit us from outside. But rather that we can do it. We can free ourselves from all of those concepts which until now have limited us. Above all, in regard to our way of behaving, the attitude, chodpa, you remember the example we gave of how in the end, the sixth Dalai Lama created a big mess for himself. That is, his circumstances did not correspond to the way he was behaving. So here, remember, in the Dzogchen teaching, we talk about having the presence of awareness. [tape gap] ...

In the time of the Buddha some monks went into a town. The faithful of that town offered them a meal. There was a bunch of them who always were getting into trouble. They were eating with their mouths wide open. The Buddha afterwards heard about this and said "When monks eat, they shouldn't open their mouths like that." Or perhaps some other monks made funny noises while they ate. The Buddha made another rule

rules, presence

"You shouldn't make that sound." Thus for every aspect of our daily life, there was a rule.

But these rules came about in the moment in which these things were happening. Imagine how many other rules one can make up that the Buddha didn't. So we see that we can't really make up this big list of rules. This is because with our body, speech and minds, and all the circumstances, a whole lot of things can come up. So in the Dzogchen teaching, being aware doesn't mean just being aware of the rules, but it means having a presence. In general what the Buddha was doing here was saying this in order that these monks wouldn't set an example for others. Because he wanted the presentation of monks to be people who presented themselves well, who were calm and stately.

But even the Buddha himself didn't consider that the rules that he made up corresponded to every situation. The Buddha certainly was aware of this. What this means is that rules are always provisional. They operate up to a certain point. But much more important is to be aware. With this awareness we can overcome all the different temporal and spatial problems we get into.

One time it was said that some monks used too much saffron. They used in on their feet, and it made their feet look very strange, like animal feet. The Buddha said "You shouldn't do this. We don't do this kind of thing." So this was the case in a country like India where you do find saffron. In the same way today we have a lot of things that didn't exist in the time of the Buddha. So all things are linked to the time and place. And therefore rules can never always correspond. The only thing that can correspond to everything is our awareness.

Let's say I go to the bathroom. There is some kind of metal pipe. I'm not attentive and I hit my head. If I'm aware, I see it. I don't bang my head. So if I'm familiar with this bathroom and I have to use it at night, I go in there and I remember and I'm aware so I don't hit my head. In general, you can't make up a rule for people to follow "When you go to the bathroom, watch out for your head." Because we don't know what type of bathroom someone is using. There are even places where they don't have bathrooms. And there are even places where the concept of a bathroom doesn't even exist. In this case, it's a useless rule, isn't it? So all these things are always linked to our presence, our condition.

So when we talk about the Dzogchen teaching beyond cause and effect, then what we were talking about is something to be found in oneself, to regulate oneself, govern oneself. But you shouldn't think that this talk about "beyond cause and effect" means that you shouldn't do any positive or good actions. It was this kind of talk that was very provocative in Buddhism. Because the Buddha talked about suffering and its cause, and that you have to do a lot of good actions, and at least minimally this is what you had to do.

That is, I have a material body, and I have my voice and mind. And the Buddhist thinks "Oh I want to devote everything to the teaching. I want to do a whole lot of prostrations." So this kind of thing arises with that understanding about how cause and effect works. But if you suddenly come up to

provocation, relative conditions, institutions someone like that and say "Oh there's a way of finding yourself beyond cause and effect", then someone might think "Oh, I tired myself out doing all those prostrations", and someone also might think "Oh that stuff is useful. It's just a kind of child's game. But we're much more important. We're grown up. We can find ourselves beyond that kind of child's play."

So this is a provocative way of talking. So if you proceed in this way, then certainly the Buddhists are going to say "This is pure provocation." But it's not a provocation if one understands what the principle is. The principle is not to arrive beyond, but to be aware. That is, if we find ourselves in the presence of awareness, then we can always find ourselves beyond limits. But remaining with our limits all the time, we're not going to find ourselves beyond. That is, when we find ourselves in the midst of our limitations, then we should try to accumulate good actions and do the best we can in regard to all this.

You have to remember that we live in this very relative condition. Even if we're quite aware that this relative condition is not totally real, still that unreality has its unreal mode of functioning. That is, we have this illusory stomach which has an illusory hunger and that hunger is taken away by the illusory food which we must illusorily eat. This is really what our relative condition is. And so you have to be really aware of this, and thus there's no provocation going on.

Now certainly there were provocative situations in Tibet in ancient times. Let's take the case of a large monastery which has very strict rules, and they had all their institutions, all their bureaucracy, all their wealth. And they have to keep that all up in order to develop. There had to be a lot of monks. If there aren't any monks, it's just like the case of the big Gelugpa monasteries Sera and Drepung of today. There aren't ruins. They're full of monks.

In order for them to continue on such a gigantic scale they had to keep up the institution, keep it functioning. And they weren't doing this just for the sake of the elegance of the monastery, but they considered that this was the teaching of the Buddha proceeding. And so all the monks, from the very most cultured and elevated ones down to those we call the dub dubs who used to like to grease their legs and walk around making these funny sounds, all of these were considered disciples of the Buddha. Perhaps you've seen this film about how things were in Tibet before.

So in regard to all this great edifice, if we're going to talk about the teaching and not the teaching of Dzogchen, but just the words of the Buddha, if we talk about what he really simply had to say, that whole thing is just going to crumble. But in the case of Dzogchen this is going to be even naturally more the case. Because the essence of the teaching has not much to do with these external considerations, but with an internal state of knowledge. Thus a lot of things are going to happen in this case. Not only are there going to be a lot of conflicts, but a lot of institutions are going to crumble. And in this case we can talk about a real provocation.

So the teaching has remained a bit more reserved to

institutions, awareness of one's condition continue seriously. When we talk about that, we're talking about the biography of how the Dzogchen teaching existed in Tibet. For us westerners here, we don't have to construct the teaching the way it existed in Tibet. The best thing for us to do is try to understand what the meaning is. And to put into practice what we understand. Especially since we don't have a lot of monks and a lot of monasteries here and a lot of opportunities to have contact with these kinds of institutions as we would have in Tibet. The most we can do is learn about it as history and imagine how it might have been.

But even if we can here make a center or even a kind of monastery, still most of us can only go there for one or a few days. We really can't go and live there. Certainly our condition of life is very different than once upon a time in Tibet. Many westerners think "Oh we really want to do, we want to know how to make a monastery, a temple." Certainly sometimes it is quite useful to make a beautiful temple. But after you've finished that very elegant, very large, temple, what do you do next? This is the principle, this is the question, I have to ask.

Isn't it much better to do that which people can understand and which will be useful for them? "Well one needs the place where practitioners can get together, to reunite, to practice together." But in this case it's unnecessary to have a gigantic temple like there existed in Tibet.

So in this way, people do a lot of things which are not aligned with that awareness of what our condition is. If we're going to do something with the Dzogchen teaching, everything we do should really correspond with how things really are. If it doesn't correspond with how things really are, even if it's considered something very sacred, it really doesn't have much value. This is the truth.

When I arrived at my master's, Changchub Dorje, a few days later I noticed a man and a woman from that teaching who arrived. They were not from a nearby neighborhood. They came from fairly far away. They didn't come just to visit the master. They weren't the type who come to visit the master, to make a few offerings, to get a few blessings, a few initiations, and then get out of there. They came to the master and they were talking with him for hours and hours.

At the beginning I didn't even know what they were talking about. I thought maybe they were asking for some kind of divination, some kind of mo. Because I realized people would come to him for medicine or some kind of advice. But since the discussion seemed to never end, I got up a little closer to try to hear what they were saying. But what they were talking about were their marital problems, such as jealousy and other things. And they were talking about all these kinds of strange things, that is, strange to me, about marital problems.

That is, because when you live your life in a monastery or in a college, you don't hear about this kind of stuff. In the college or the monastery, not only don't they talk about men and women in general, but they also don't talk about more specific aspects. I felt very strange. These people are talking to this master about these things. First of all, here are these people talking to the Master about this stuff. Not

chod, Shijed

only that, but the master chimed in right away and was also talking about the same strange stuff.

At first I thought "What does this have to do with the teaching?" But after hanging out there for awhile, I learned that this really had something to do with the teaching. Because for the master what was important were concrete things that had to do with the condition of the individual, that could be worked with, could be applied. He didn't consider it something sacred.

So this is a very important principle of the teaching when we say "Don't falsify yourself. Proceed according to how things are." So proceed with awareness and learn how to integrate all the circumstances into your practice.

Let's explain a few verses from the book once more. I want to say a little bit about the practice of chod. Because it's always better to understand how to practice more precisely and more clearly. The practice of chod arises from methods that come from both the Sutras and the Tantras.

And many people define the chod as belonging to the Shijed (zhi-byed) tradition. The Shijed, or pacification, is a tradition introduced above all by Phadampa Sangay. In the same way the Shijed arose as a combination of both the Sutras and the Tantras. But always the Shijed, actual kyerim practices, that is, something very similar to those of the Anuttara tantras. And in regard to its final stage, that is the dzogrim, it's very similar to Mahamudra. And also there's a lot of Dzogchen teaching included within in. And this is the way in which this particular teaching of Phadampa, the Shijed, arose.

Now since Machig naturally received this teaching of Shijed from her master Phadampa, the Shijed is naturally considered one of the sources for the chod. But it's not the case that chod is the same as the Shijed. When a lot of people talk about the history of the chod, they talk about the po and mo chod, that is the masculine and feminine aspects. What they mean by this is that one form of the chod comes from Phadampa Sangay, the male, and the other form comes from Machig herself, the female form. Certainly within the lineage of the chod, one of the important figures is Phadampa. Because one of its fundamental bases is this Shijed.

But the chod, and what the chod means, comes from Machig Labdron (ma-gcig lab-sgron). Her way of practicing the chod makes use of this large damaru. They also use the kangling (rkang-ling ??), the thigh-bone trumpet, and also a human skin, the yamchi (?). It became a kind of practice that one did going between many cemeteries. In this practice what one did was to go to those places and call up all of our fears in the forms of evil spirits and these kinds of things, and to practice using that kind of vibration.

Now the principle of the Shijed is not like that at all. Because the Shijed is a teaching whose principle is very much in general like that of Mahamudra. In the Shijed there's also a lot of connection with the Sutras. For example, there's the teaching of giving more consideration to others than to oneself. One would, for example, try to assume the position of someone who is suffering. This is a way of practicing that comes from the Mahayana Sutra. So here in the Shijed they

Sutras, attachment, evil spirits

combine a great deal of these practices of Tantras with those of the Sutras.

Certainly Machig also made use of this kind of thing. However, her whole practice of the chod was based on two fundamentals. One came from the Tantric teachings, and from Dzogchen. There was the concept of transmission and the taking of initiation through visualization. And when the practitioners of chod do a retreat, they train themselves a great deal in this kind of thing.

The other principle aspect is what is called the lujin (lus-sbyin), the offering of the body. Because it was recognized that with this principle, one could overcome the fundamental basis of attachment. Also in the sutras, there is the famous shunyata that they talk about. In the texts of the Prajna paramita Sutras they go about negating everything without exception. The whole point of this can be summed up with the necessity to overcome attachment. This attachment is the fundamental basis which impedes us from the understanding of the unreality of things. So the whole point to understand and to discover is that all of our problems, and the reason why all of our vision becomes so concrete and solid, is that it's born from attachment.

So what Machig did was, instead of making a request and asking some kind of a divinity to protect me, she did the opposite. She asked those beings which she would fear, to come and take me away. There's a saying of Machig. nepa ?? means illness or an ill person. dre is evil spirits. So when one is sick and one talks about evil spirits, it doesn't mean there's some kind of strange being around. But the negative spirits just meant the way in which these negative forces are present. That is, whenever we feel ill, the consideration is that there is a negative force that is disturbing us.

Usually when people are really worried about these evil spirits, what they want is some kind of protection so they won't get near them. And if there is this kind of negative spirit present, they want to find some means to get rid of it, to chase it away. So very often when a Tibetan is ill, they go to a master or they invite a master to do some kind of ritual to get rid of this negative force. This is the way we're used to dealing with diseases. This is our conception.

But she said "nepa drela je (??)". It means to give that sick person over to the evil spirit. And ask them to accompany that person. dra ?? means an enemy. That is, I ask my enemy to accompany me. And why am I afraid of going? Because I'm afraid there are going to be some enemies who are going to disturb me. But when one puts one's trust in one's enemies, he can no longer say they are enemies. We can understand this from the Dzogchen teaching where we talk about in the end, the ability to integrate everything, both good and evil, into this state.

And another phrase of hers was, instead of asking for a lot of protection, a lot of positive things to help one, it's much better to say to these evil spirits "Come on. Have your fill. Enjoy this miserable body." This was her basic principle. This kind of teaching had a really fantastic way of working. With the practice of chod, this kind of capacity could be concretely manifested. Usually there were two

illness, evil spirits, chod
methods for individuals to manifest their capacity.

There are some practitioners who are great protagonists of mantra. They know how to do rites to protect someone's family, for example. That is, when someone is ill, they invite these kind of mantra practitioners, and they do a rite, and in this way they cure that person. And those people know how it's done. That is, that practitioner intervenes through their power in order, with a ritual, to protect that individual. That's one way of manifesting capacity.

On the other hand we have the chodpa, those who really know how to do the chod. So especially in eastern Tibet, the chodpas were invited when somebody was ill. Very rarely would they do a nicely prepared ritual. The other type that we talked about, they usually do some nice ceremonial things. They construct things like namkhas, and what do they do when they arrive? They do the practice that they always do, which is principally the lujin, the offering of the body.

So many times when I was young I was with these chodpas when they did their lujin, when there were several people in our family who were ill, for example. These chodpas came, and they talked calmly with the old people, and then in the evening they did this lujin. Now I didn't only see one chodpa do this. I saw many. In the evening when it just began to get dark, they didn't use any kind of light. It seemed to me that they liked it better if it was a bit dark. And everybody who was concerned was placed together, the people for whom the chod was being done.

But it wasn't the case that everybody involved, like myself, knew really how to practice the chod. Of course in that situation, if you knew how to do the chod, it was much better. In that case it was more like the chodpa was doing a kind of protection for those people, like the other type of practitioners did. So we would all be sitting around that chodpa. He'd start off. And he'd begin with his invocation and then the Guruyoga, and he called forth all of these malignant spirits. They usually used very simple words, so we knew what he was talking about.

And while he was calling up these spirits, he would take the kangling, that is, the trumpet. But he wouldn't sound it. He would be banging it. So this was also a way of calling forth these spirits. Many times he would call them. He would hit, and then he would also sound the trumpet. If it wasn't a case of very serious illness, there wouldn't be a particular spirit that would be called up. In the normal case they would do the lujin just like we would do in our practice. In the lujin many of them have what they call the wangdu (??), and wangdu means to make submissive, to feel superior to. [tape gap] ...

Because I thought they were really going to start hitting me. However this wasn't like the Zen master hitting someone with a stick. So what they used was this yenchi ?? . Maybe it wasn't really a human skin but that's what it was supposed to be. And they rolled it up, and it was worked over very nicely, and even looked like, you know, you could still see the arms. Perhaps at the place where the head was, there were even a few mantras written in there. This was a very good thing to beat with.

offering of the body, 4 guests

According to their capacities, this thing had a really amazing function. Especially in regard to illnesses having to do with nervousness and an imbalance of the energies, it could certainly cure. Because this was a way in which they intervened with their own energy. So you have to understand it was not based on the power of mantra or on the ritual. It was based upon the power of their visualization, that is, in which they integrated everything into this gift they were making of the body. And this is the real essence of Machig's practice.

So if you're thinking about practicing the chod, you must know that it must not lack the lujin, that is, this giving of the body. Certainly there are different ways to do this offering, especially in terms of who one is offering one's body to. Especially when we get to the point where we're doing that OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM, where we're multiplying the offering.

At this point we can visualize the four dren ??, that is the four hosts. And these four guests, this is a very general type of visualization. First we have the konchog (dkon-mchog) who are the highest form of the guests, the illuminated beings. That is, the usual beings to whom we make offerings in a temple, for example. What we offer them is all the nice things, nectars, perfumes, etc.

Then the next group are called the karmo ??, that is, the types like herukas and yidams, that is, all the manifestations of the Sambhogakaya. They're all surrounded by the usual guardians, Mahakala, Ekajati, all beings of this type. According to Tantrism, the kind of things you offer to these beings are a bit more raw and rough. So you're not offering in this case flowers and incense and perfume, but rather what is called rakta, balingta, these things. That is what we would call these fierce offering, and visualize this kind of thing.

The third group of guests are called the gegrig (??), and they are those to whom we owe debts. Geg usually means negative spirits who can provoke illness. And also beings who through their negative energies can interfere with an individual, interrupt them. And also we can put in here what we usually refer to as our karma. In this case karma is like a debt that we owe, a very heavy debt that we owe, that must be paid back until it's all been paid for. And this is what is called lenchag (??). This means you have to pay back. Len means you have to pay back, but chag means there's still a debit there, still more to be paid for.

But for this third group there's no limited way to pay them off. There's no specific limited form of payment. We can pay it back in whatever way we can. So when we do the chod, whatever comes to our mind, we can visualize this and use it as an offering to these beings. Also there's no particular rules about the types of beings one should visualize.

Because when you become a little bit expert in practicing chod, you develop a lot of nyams. It's not that the visualization is so complicated, but it's that one's fantasies begin to run loose a bit. So when it's a matter of visualizing this third group of guests, you don't know what's

nyams, transfer

going to come into your mind. As it comes to you, you visualize it. The important thing is to know what this third group of guests is about. So remember when we're doing the offerings, before we go into the OM AH HUM, there are the three words jang pel gyur (sbyang spel bsgyur).

So when we do this practice, the first thing that we do, simply speaking, is a kind of a transfer. That is, the state of our consciousness transforms into Dorje Phagmo, or Sihamukha, that is, some fierce being. Why do we visualize this fierce being? Because to visualize in this fierce way is a symbol of putting energy into action. When we have visualized ourselves as this fierce dakini like Sihamukha, what's left is our ordinary body like a cadaver in front of us. We're doing a visualization. It's not the real thing. Because otherwise people might be a little worried about practicing the chod.

Now when we're doing the practice of the chod for others who don't know how to do it, and that person might not even know what the basic concept is, but that person is participating, they are present there, I should visualize that also that person present there, that I'm doing it for, their body has also become like a cadaver. That is, my body and theirs are both cadavers.

And after that it says that you cut the cranium and you take the skull cup in your hand. This is me as Sihamukha doing this. If I'm doing this for others, it's not that I have to do the same kind of thing one by one for those people. But in one visualization I can visualize everyone, all Sihamukhas, at one time.

Because there are many practices of Sihamukha in which there are five or twelve or thirty Sihamukhas, according to the actions being done. Sometimes when we're doing a collective practice together, I become the ferocious dakini or heruka, that is, I'm the practitioner. I'm doing this. And someone else is doing the same thing. My way of doing the practice is that I manifest myself as a gigantic Sihamukha. But all those around me are also manifested as the same level of dakini. This kind of visualization is called trochung (??). This means they're fierce, but small. In this case the other Sihamukhas manifesting are smaller than me. It's not that I'm more important and I'm overpowering them. But everything that's manifesting, all that I'm experiencing, comes from me. Everything around me is being experienced relative to me. And that's why we say they're secondary and smaller.

So you can visualize many secondary Sihamukhas all around you doing the same thing, cutting off the top of the skull and filling the cranium. Or I can just visualize myself as the Sihamukha and cut off the cranium. But I'll put the corpses of everybody around me into that cranium because there's no limit to the size of it. And then the a-thung dang ham hamgyi dudtsir zhu, (A thung dang ham gyis bdud rtsir zhu), that's where we have the a-thung, that is the symbol of the fire, and the ham, the symbol of the nectar. And it's like that cooks the offering and multiplies it.

Then at the end of the visualization we have the three words jang pel jur (sbyang spel bsgyur). Jang means to

guests, old age

purify. When we talk about purifying, it's especially for the benefit of the first group of guests, that is, for the superior type of guest, all of these peaceful illuminated beings, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas. Even if everything that's cooking up in the kapala is meat and bones, still it manifests as all kinds of beautiful things, nectar, etc. In this way one transforms the offering for the first group.

Remember for the second group we need things a bit more fierce and raw, that is, meat and bones, all that kind of thing. We do the same with this visualization. For the third group it depends on whatever it is that we owe, whether it's food or money or whatever. We multiply and offer that. So we have the purification, the multiplication, and they *jur* means to transform it according to what is necessary. It might not be the case that the debt can be paid off in food. You might owe some clothes, for example. And there can come even all kinds of nyams in regard to this kind of practice. So without any limits, one always has this possibility to transform anything that's necessary.

Then there's another type of guest. We call them the guests who deserve compassion, the guests of compassion in the six lokas. When we are talking about visualizing the six lokas, what we're thinking about above all is their suffering. If there wasn't this suffering then it wouldn't be the samsara any more. Even among the six lokas there are the three superior ones, that is, the gods, devas, the semi-gods, asuras, and the human beings.

When the Buddha talked about the truth of suffering, he spoke about the suffering of the gods as *potong* (??), that is, that they were transformed and they fell. This means that after a long time of all the god-like enjoyments for centuries and centuries, they realized that they would have to fall a long way down. Among the semi-gods the suffering came from their powerful enemies which caused them to be struggling and fighting all the time. All the time they were charged up with this jealousy and ready to fight.

Now among human beings we have four fundamental characteristic types of suffering. We don't remember too much about the suffering of birth. The suffering of old age depends on the person. But if someone is very aware, I think even the suffering of old age is not so great. But if someone is not very aware when they're becoming old, they really start to worry about this and they can't imagine how they are going to be able to grow old. As they get older and older they think more about how they were once a child and a young person. So old people are thinking like this.

This isn't only the case with really old people, but when young people are beginning to get into the prime of life, they're beginning to worry. Because life is a bit like a flower, like a rose. As soon as it's opened, it's beautifully perfumed and beautiful, fantastic. However, the next day when it's opening up even more, the petals are beginning to droop a bit. Then the next day when it opens up again, the petals are still beautiful at the center, but the ones along the outside are beginning to fall. This is just like the young person who is beginning to say "Oh my goodness. All the leaves of this beautiful body, whatever, slowly fall." So this is the

old age, suffering

suffering of old age. The point is the suffering of aging is not something just for old people, but for everyone.

But then when one really becomes old there's another kind of suffering. One is not able to walk any more. You're not able to communicate very well. When you're young, you have a lot of friends. You can go here and there and talk. But you know how people act in regard to old people. It's very annoying to have them around, and then they become a bit isolated. And then also there are many more problems physically at this age.

Milarepa once said "The way of sitting down is like a valise stuck on a pack animal." That is, when it's falling off, at a certain point it just has to fall like that. That's the way an old person sits. And the way they walk is like they're trying to catch a bird. When you try to catch a bird, you try to sneak up behind it very slowly, slowly, otherwise it's going to get away. Then when they get up it's just like a dagger that's been stuck into the ground and you have a great deal of trouble pulling it out. So Milarepa said "When you get to this point, it's just like one is getting ready to see the fierce face of death." And this is what we mean by the real suffering of old age.

Then another suffering that we human beings have is the suffering of illness. And we know there are many types, whether it be for young people or old. Then the other suffering is that of death itself. And these are the four great sufferings that human beings have to put up with from the time of birth. So even if we talk about these three so-called superior types of existence, they still have this kind of suffering.

And this is not even to speak about the three inferior ones. The pretas have tremendous hunger and thirst because they have the cause of great avarice and attachment. The hell beings have their suffering caused directly by anger. Now as to the suffering of animals, we usually say it comes from the fact that they're always eating one another. Not only this, but we see the different ways in which animals suffer. In any case, it's not very difficult for us to understand what suffering is.

The point is that a practitioner knows about all these problems and thus has the presence of this fourth type of guest, all of these poor beings. In the same way we multiply and transform our offering into all things that they need. So one should not lack any of these four types of guests when one is doing the chod. Then one should have this offering in this kapala be infinite, the size of the universe. And one should multiply and transform the offerings in them into whatever is needed.

Our four types of guests are all present there, and with this whole presence, I do the lujin. This is a very general type of lujin. When we want to do a more specific lujin, we have specific offerings for specific types of guests. There's a type of practice called dangso dupa (??). Dang ?? means provocation. We're talking about beings who manifest themselves through negative forces which can provoke problems. When a person has a contact with this kind of power, or force, there can also happen physical illnesses. In this case one

offering of the body, gift of the teaching can try to get rid of this kind of force.

The chodpas do another kind of lujin, which is given this name dangso dupa. We have the offerings transformed in a different way. So whether it's us doing it, or the interested person, that is the ill person, what we visualize is everything that comes out of the negative forces that are present in that sick individual, water and blood and all kinds of black stuff, for example. Even if their body isn't in that ugly or bad a condition, visualizing it we transform it into this black mess. Because that's the kind of thing that the beings that we're offering to need. And in doing this we can cure that kind of person. This will clarify for us a great deal what we mean by the transformation in the case of the second offering.

So we have the lujin, and then we have another offering, the chojin (chos-sbyin). This means the gift of the teaching. Certainly it's not very easy to make a gift of the teaching to certain kinds of negative evil spirits. But what we have in mind here is to place a precise cause in these beings. So after the lujin, toward the end of the chod we have this chonam zugnyan tabute (chos rnam gzugs brnyan lta bu ste). This is the gift of the teaching.

These are words that come from the Buddha. But what we're saying here is that which we know and we apply, the teaching itself, the principle of it. We're communicating the teaching to those able to understand it. This is really the full expression of a practitioner's compassion toward other beings, even if it is very difficult to communicate this.

For example we meet a being who is extremely hungry. It's not so easy just to say "Oh eat this little thing and that will get rid of your hunger." What we try to do, we give them a little food to calm them down, and then we try to teach them "Do you understand why you're hungry, what the cause of it is", etc. "And here's a method to overcome this for the rest of your life." There might be some beings who would be able or would like to understand this kind of thing, but a lot of them will just be interested in eating. Therefore we say it's not too easy to communicate the teaching. So we have these two phases of which the lujin is fundamental.

What also can't be lacking in the chod is the Guruyoga. There are the words of Jigmay Lingpa here in the chod, rangnang odsal dewa chenpoy ying (rang snang 'od gsal bde ba chen po'i dbyings), Guruyoga here. Then after we have an even more simple form. We have the OM Machigmala (om ma gcig ma la). That's an invocation which is linked together with the Guruyoga. So this is not only essential practice of the chod, but as we said, it's essential practice for Dzogchen.

So in regard to the chod you have to remember two important things, the Guruyoga and the lujin, even if you don't know how to say a whole lot of words. And very often a whole bunch of words can just make things more complicated. We have this OM Machigmala solwadeb (gsol ba 'debs). This is not too difficult. With this one can do a complete Guruyoga visualization. Even if you don't know the Tibetan language, that's not important.

Machigmala is Machig Labdron. Solwadeb means I ask. this usually means to invoke. But I'm invoking, I'm asking,

guruyoga, empowerment

for something. What as I asking? What I'm asking is a communication, a reunification, with the primordial state. And I ask this, one by one, of the three vajras. OM representing the state of the body, AH the voice, and HUM the state of the mind. So we have these three, very simple. Then we have the white, the red, and the blue, karmo (dkar-po), marpo (dmar po), ngonpo (sngon po). And as we usually have, the white OM, the red AH, the blue HUM. Everybody knows this.

And jingilob (byin gyis rlob) means empowerment. This also means an initiation. So what is it that I'm asking of this OM AH HUM? To empower me, potentiate me. So at the moment when one is pronouncing these things, it is linked to a very precise visualization. So when one begins one has this presence of Machigmalā in front of one, like this. We don't know if she really looked like that or not. But what we have is her manifesting in the Sambhogakaya dimension, the pure dimension. That is, she's manifesting a bit like Dorjepamo. And Machigmalā is manifesting in front of us as the unification of all the masters, with the white OM and the red AH and the blue HUM at the three places.

When we say OM Machigmalā solwadeb there appears that white OM, with the AH Machigmalā solwadeb the red AH appears, and then HUM Machigmalā solwadeb, the blue HUM appears. Not only did they appear but we have the presence that this is the unification of the state of all illuminated beings. So when we say karmo OM gi jingilob, then from this white OM the rays come down to our place. And we receive all of the potentialities of the body. And the once again with the marpo AH yi jingilob, we have the red AH. Then with the ngonpo we have the blue HUM, the same thing.

This is the same way we do a Guruyoga with Padmasambhava. Now these three have been gradual, one by one. Then after that we have the words ku sung thug ki jinchenphob (sku gsung thugs kyis byin chen phob). ku sung thug mean the body, speech and mind of the vajra. And jinchenphob means to potentiate me to a great empowerment. When in the Padmasambhava visualization we say jnana siddhi AH, it's the same thing. That is, the rays come into us not gradually, but all together. Then the last line ma yum chen go 'phang thob par shog, ma yum chen go means the great mother, Machig. What one does in this moment is the total unification. The integration can be either I integrate into Machigmalā or Machig integrates into me. Above all, after this we have the PHAT.